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✓ THE
PRINCETON
SEMINARY
BULLETIN

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J. Gresham Machen: Apologist and Exegete

by CULLEN I K STORY

FOETY-ONE years ago the New Testament scholar, J. Gresham Machen, passed on to his reward. His relationship to Princeton Seminary—first as student, then as instructor and assistant professor in New Testament—spanned roughly the first three decades of the twentieth century. Following his undergraduate work at Johns Hopkins University and his theological work at Princeton Seminary, in 1905-06 Machen took informal post-graduate work at Marburg (under A. Jülicher and Wilhelm Hermann) and at Göttingen (under E. Schürer and W. Bousset among others). He was a close friend of Francis L. Patton, president of Princeton Seminary (1902-1913), of Harris E. Kirk, pastor of the Franklin Street Church in Baltimore, and of his seminary colleagues, W. P. Armstrong and B. B. Warfield. In 1914, at the First Presbyterian Church of Plainsboro, New Jersey, he was ordained to the gospel ministry. Machen's scholarly life at Princeton Seminary was significant but marred by turmoil and tension. Over the years he became convinced that Presbyterianism had drifted far from its biblical and confessional base. Conflicts with colleagues and church leaders developed and grew in intensity until in June of 1929, Machen resigned from his post of assistant professor at Princeton Seminary and organized Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia.

A native of Iowa, the Rev. Cullen I K Story is an alumnus of Johns Hopkins University (M.A.), Dallas Theological Seminary (Th.M.), and Princeton Theological Seminary (Ph.D.). After missionary work, both national and overseas, including principal of the Near East School of Theology in Lebanon (1954-57), Dr. Story became an instructor at Princeton and since 1967 has been Director of the Language Program and associate professor in the Department of Biblical Studies.

Furthermore, concerned over what he viewed as doctrinal disloyalty in the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian church, in 1933 he took the initiative in the formation of an Independent Board of foreign missions. In 1934 the General Assembly called on all Presbyterian members of the Independent Board to sever their relationship with it. Machen refused. Accordingly, in 1935 at a trial in Trenton conducted by the presbytery of New Brunswick, Machen was suspended from the ministry. In 1936 he became the first moderator of a new church, known today as The Orthodox Presbyterian Church. On January 1, 1937, at the age of fifty-six, Machen died of pneumonia in a Roman Catholic hospital in Bismarck, North Dakota. Such in brief was the life of one of the most outspoken Presbyterian fundamentalists of the twentieth century. An appended bibliography will suggest source material on Machen's life and influence. The article that follows aims to understand his writings and thereby to assess their apologetic¹ and exegetical² worth to the church and to the scholarly world.

¹ Definitions are needed. In the early centuries of the Christian church, an "apologist" was one who presented a reasonable defense of the Christian faith to the non-Christian world. As an example, in the middle of the second century, Justin Martyr addressed his *First Apology* to the Roman emperor and senate and to all the Roman people. His

Machen's works fall neatly into three chronological periods—the nineteen tens, the twenties and the thirties.

(A) In the first period, Machen was a frequent contributor to the *Princeton Theological Review* (PTR). His book reviews, thirty-three in number, survey works on New Testament Greek grammar, commentaries on New Testament books, and works on other Biblical subjects. In addition to the reviews, Machen produced eight major articles. One article, "Christianity and Culture," was an address given originally to the Presbyterian Ministers' Association of Philadelphia (May 20, 1912). Later, with minor changes, the same address was delivered to the students and faculty of Princeton Seminary at the beginning of the second century of the Seminary's

Second Apology was directed simply to "Romans," while his *Dialogue* consists of an extended conversation with the Jew, Trypho. The early apologist, therefore, aimed to meet false charges made against Christianity and, at the same time, to set forth a clear account of Christian faith and life. But, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the word "apologist"—joined now to the term "apologetics"—had become quite different in meaning. No longer did the words suggest *ad hoc* answers to pagan or Jewish outsiders who were opposed to the Christian faith. The outsiders were now considered to be *within* Christendom. Thus, in Machen and Warfield, apologetics came to mean a reasonable and comprehensive treatment of "all the elements which the Calvinists deemed vital to the Christian faith" (W. D. Livingstone, *The Princeton Apologetic as Exemplified in the Work of Benjamin B. Warfield and J. Gresham Machen: A Study in American Theology, 1880-1930*, unpublished dissertation, Yale University, 1948).

² The terms "exegete" and "exegetical" mean today what they meant in the first century. They refer to interpretation or explanation (cf. Luke 24:35; Acts 15:12). Hence an exegete "leads out" of the Scriptures the meaning that is there.

history. The address affirms that Christians come to terms with culture by consecrating the arts and sciences to the service of God. Christians cannot be indifferent to any area of culture, for either culture is false and must be exposed or it is to be made useful in advancing God's kingdom. Another article, "History and Faith," was Machen's inaugural address as assistant professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis at the Seminary. It is a frank and forthright defense of a supernatural Jesus whose divine and human natures are seen by Machen to be inextricably united in one person. Furthermore, Machen affirms that Jesus' messianic consciousness is too deeply imbedded in the sources to be removed by any critical process. Only a Jesus who is keenly conscious of his mission can account for the origin of the Christian church. A third article, "Recent Criticism of the Book of Acts," expresses Machen's pleasure at the return of Harnack, Torrey, and other scholars to the conviction that Luke is the author of the Luke-Acts work. To Machen, the change signified a "return to tradition," a fresh realization of the uniqueness of Christ and of the Christian movement. Five other essays by Machen on Jesus' birth were incorporated later into a major monograph. Emerging from the eight essays is the clear direction of the writer's works which were to appear.

(B) The second period of Machen's literary work was very productive and thus becomes important for an understanding of his contribution as apologist and exegete. What follows is a critique of two of his three major scholarly works³ and one of his more popular

³ The third scholarly work—not treated here—is his *New Testament Greek for Be-*

works, all of which appeared in the nineteen twenties.

(1) Machen's book on Paul, *The Origin of Paul's Religion*, consists of the James Sprunt lectures delivered at Union Theological Seminary in Virginia. The book builds a strong defense for the supernatural nature of Paul's religion. The writer is an apologist—par excellence—as he steers the reader through a labyrinth of reconstructions of Paul and Paulinism. He critiques von Harnack's claim that there were sharp differences between Paul and the original disciples. He questions Wrede's conviction that Paul was influenced strongly by Jewish apocalyptic views and that Christ's humanity, according to Paul, was something strange to Jesus. He opposes Bousset's idea that Paulinism is a religion of redemption derived from pagan religion, not from the historical Jesus.⁴ Machen then presents a history of Paul's life from his early years to the triumph of Gentile freedom. There is a strong supernaturalism in Paul, says Machen, expressed in a simple yet significant axiom, i.e. the religion of Paul was based on what Christ had done for him and continued to do through him. There is in Paul no distinction between an historical Jesus and a heavenly Christ, no adop-

tionist Christology by which Christ grew gradually into divinity, no *kenosis* by which he relinquished his higher nature so that his life and teaching on earth are matters of indifference. "He [Paul] regarded Christ as Lord and Master, and he identified that Christ fully with the Jesus who lived but a few years before" (p. 118). In essence, the book is both Machen's answer to von Harnack, Wrede and Bousset, and also his own exegesis of Paulinism.

But now we must ask, (a) How enduring is Machen's apology? (b) How comprehensive and careful is his exegesis of Paulinism?

The answer to the first question is quite positive; the relationship of Paul to Jesus, to Judaism ("normative" or apocalyptic), and to the pagan world, continues to occupy scholars today. R. Bultmann, for example, claims to find in Paul a gnostic substratum of the myth of the redeemed redeemer but, like Machen, he takes exception to Bousset's conviction that Paul was beholden to the myths of the pagan mystery cults. W. D. Davies senses that rabbinic Judaism and the special contribution of the Dead Sea Scrolls have done much to establish the Jewish background of Paul's writings. Like Machen but contrary to both Bousset and Wrede, J. Munck finds a firm historical base for Paul's call in the conversion accounts in Acts. And, like Machen also, Munck affirms a strong and amicable relationship between Paul and the Jerusalem church. And though in a different vein from Wrede, Munck has stressed Wrede's end-time emphasis in Paul's theology, sensing that Paul himself is an eschatological figure entrusted with an eschatological message. And finally, G. Bornkamm, unlike Machen, questions the book of Acts as an histori-

*ginner*s, a grammar that continues to be used in numerous colleges, universities, and seminaries. Greek scholar as he was, if Machen were with us today, he would credit Princeton Seminary with at least one "plus item": the Greek placement examination which he with W. P. Armstrong initiated at the Seminary, is still in operation.

⁴ Machen's prediction of the future impact of Bousset's work was more prophetic than Machen realized, for, fifty-seven years after the first edition of the work in German (1913), the book was deemed worthy of translation into English (1970).

cal source, and proceeds to reconstruct the apostle's life and ministry from his letters alone. And yet Bornkamm, like Machen, compares favorably the body of ideas found in Paul with the teaching of Jesus. In brief, it can be said that the apology which Machen presented with consummate skill over fifty years ago, points to the live issues in Pauline scholarship today.

But now for the second question: How careful in detail and comprehensive in scope is Machen's exegetical work? A positive answer appears doubtful. In the first place, Machen's treatment of the three accounts in Acts of Paul's conversion is quite meager, especially when compared, for example, with the careful and thorough treatment by J. Munck (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*). Moreover, in his reaction to Wrede, Machen failed to take seriously possible background material for Pauline eschatology found in First Enoch and in The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. At least, in all honesty, the question ought to be raised as to whether there were ways in which the Messiah of the Jewish apocalypses—modified, of course, by Paul's knowledge of the exalted Christ through revelation and by his acquaintance with the historical Jesus through the disciples—did affect Paul's presentation of Christ. Furthermore, in his reaction to Bousset, Machen dismissed all too quickly Bousset's exegesis of the Pauline terms "in Christ" or "in the Lord." Actually, Bousset's treatment of the terms is a mine of information (about eighteen pages long), distinguished not only by a careful discussion of the texts in Paul—both their individual and corporate significance—but by a discussion of various close parallels in pagan literature. Again, in a section devoted

to alleged parallels to the Christian sacraments found in the mystery religions, while Machen reveals a close acquaintance with the sacramental hypotheses of the history-of-religions-school of his day, he nonetheless fails to give a careful exposition of Pauline texts by which the same hypotheses may be answered. Finally, on the issue of Paul's relationship to Jesus, Machen posed the easy question: Do the occasional references found in Paul's writings to the kingdom of God present the same meaning which it has in Jesus' teaching? But the hard question is: Why is there the strange shift in terms, i.e. from the "kingdom of God" (synoptic gospels) to the "church" (Paul)? The question calls for exegetical work which is missing from Machen's monograph.

The pressing issue which Machen's book leaves behind is simply this: Can a defense of the faith bypass the exposition thereof without losing what is vital in the process? Is this what Caspar Wistar Hodge meant as he expressed his regret at the announcement of Machen's election (not confirmed by the General Assembly) to the Stuart Professorship of Apologetics and Christian Ethics at Princeton Seminary? "To 'open the Scripture,'" said Hodge, "to expound its truths, I consider the highest of all tasks, and even of greater 'apologetic' value in the long run than its 'defense.'"⁵

(2) Machen's popular book *What Is Faith?*, issued in 1925, is a collection of lectures and articles which appeared in earlier years. The work reads easily, proceeding from a discussion of the object of faith, God and Christ, to faith

⁵ Quoted by Ned B. Stonehouse, *J. Gresham Machen—A Biographical Memoir*, p. 387.

and its relation to human needs, faith seen in relation to the gospel and salvation, and finally, faith viewed in relation to works and hope.

Faith, says Machen, involves the acceptance of propositions about God (pp. 47ff). Therefore, faith is theistic, i.e. it is based on the knowledge of a God who created the world, who though immanent in the world is distinct from, and sovereign over, all that he has made. Knowledge of God as the basis of faith is attained in three ways—through the works of nature, through conscience, and peculiarly, through the Bible. Ultimately, faith stakes its claim on God's act in Christ. Because sin is the great barrier between God and the individual, Christ's redeeming work alone makes it possible for a sinful person to become a child of God. Christ must be seen first as Savior, then as example: first "trust in his redeeming blood," then "try his works to do."

Faith, however, is not merely concerned with Christ as a sufficient Savior, but it focuses on individual needs, e.g., the consciousness of sin and human rebellion against God's law. No purely intellectual approach to Christianity will satisfy. The moral uniqueness of Jesus and the miracle of his resurrection form the foundation of the Christian church. Neither the beauty nor idealism of Christianity nor the desire for companionship can compensate for a thorough-going conviction of human sin. Companionship with Jesus, for example, emerges out of a deep contrition (Luke 5:8). Only a new and powerful proclamation of the law can cause one to seek grace through faith. Faith saves us and this means that God saves us through his grace. To be justified suggests not a reward that is earned but a gift that is received.

Moreover, says Machen, the beginning of the Christian life is not an achievement but an experience which is followed by a battle against sin. But how can the battle be won? In ourselves we are weak, says the author, and we will surely fail; we can and must depend wholly on the power of the Spirit.

Such, in brief, is the essence of one of Machen's more popular books. Its avowed aim is to reach the common professing Christian. Its strength lies in its simple and direct appeal. Machen's style resembles the Stoic diatribe in that he anticipates the questions of his opponents and then proceeds to answer them in a clear and concise fashion. He offers propositions for faith to grasp. To exegete, says Machen, means to describe the truth of the Bible in which faith finds its anchor. Precisely at this point, I think, we find the first basic methodological weakness of Machen's approach. Exegesis *does* indeed mean to describe what is there. Exegesis *is* historically conditioned. Thus, for example, Pauline letters were occasioned by circumstances in time and place. Faith, however, means far more than to affirm propositions about what is there in the Bible. Paul's essay on food offered to idols (1 Cor 8:1-11:1), for example, is directed to an historical situation at Corinth (A.D. 57) which no longer exists. The faithful exegete senses that Paul's treatment has no immediate application or meaning for the church today. One may claim that Paul's essay needs to be "updated" or "explicated," or "applied" to a vast array of problems which arise in the contemporary church. To venture, however, upon an exegetical "application" is quite different from an acceptance of propositional truth. A more difficult hermeneutical problem faces us in that

the early apostolic church (and, for that matter, the early church in America) gave passive assent to slavery. On the credit side, the Ephesian and Colossian letters (Eph 6:5-9; Col 3:22-4:1) imply that the gospel brings with it an amelioration of the condition of slaves, while a few texts affirm that the new life in Christ breaks down rigid social barriers (e.g. Gal 3:26-29; Philem 16). And yet, apparently, Paul did not urge the freedom of slaves (1 Cor 7:21-22); Ignatius of Antioch, ca. A.D. 107, certainly did not (Ign to Polycarp 4:3). Thus to claim with Machen that faith gives assent to propositions about what is there in the Bible is hardly a viable position. This does not mean that exegesis is concerned with only a part of the Bible, for the entire Bible comes down to us as the living word of God. In interpreting Scripture, says Schlatter, "We are confronted not only with the past but also with the present, not only with what happened inside other people but also with what is happening inside ourselves."⁶ Preeminently the church needs to give heed to its history, to hearken to the past, to yield itself to the givenness of its heritage, since it is through its heritage that the church is formed and re-formed today. On the other hand, exegesis will surely go awry if it is solely concerned with connections between past and present. To do this, says Schlatter, means that we will observe the past only so long as our own issues and interest coincide with the object. That would mean that our perception would be "directed exclusively towards what we can at once make our own."⁷

Faith means, for example, that we can yield ourselves to the letter of faith (Galatians) in its own given situation. Our concern in the letter is surely not with the locale of the churches—whether in north Galatia or in the south—but with the nature of the teaching which threatened to undo the work which Paul had started. As we listen to the letter directed to the first century churches in Galatia, we are driven on in history to the meaning which it had in the early sixteenth century, and finally, to our own desperate need for the letter in the twentieth century. For, quite appropriately, we bring our own situation and our own need today to the letter in order to listen to its message. In the first century, the letter proclaimed a standing before God through faith alone apart from the Jewish law. In the sixteenth century, with his watchword *sola fide*, Luther exeged Galatians to a people weighed down with laws imposed upon them by their religious leaders. In the twentieth century, faith in terms of the Galatian letter is to be proclaimed not to a church that is burdened by the Jewish law nor by its own laws, but to a church that all too easily professes its faith in the gospel only to insulate itself from involvement in a genuine gospel ministry to the spiritual and social needs of society. How often is the church today embarrassed as it witnesses society wrestling with problems of human rights and justice that the church ought to have ministered to long before. Moreover, faith in terms of the Galatian letter meets a church today whose confidence in its own institutional life particularly, as well as in government and in the political process generally, has been severely shaken. "If the foundations are destroyed, what has a righteous one ac-

⁶ "The Nature of New Testament Theology," *Studies in Biblical Theology*, vol. 25, p. 118.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

complished?" (the literal Hebrew of Psalm 11:3). The temptation will be for the church to succumb to a gospel tailored to the individual alone, evidencing little or no social concern—a message of morality and self-reliance showing little or no concept of service in and through the body of Christ. In the face of this temptation, the message of Galatians for today—"by faith alone"—can peal forth with a clear sound, even clearer perhaps than when it first went forth to the Galatian churches. In brief, the expositor of faith can make no quick and easy transition from the first century to the twentieth. Inevitably, one must ask how the reality of the past is related to the givenness of the present, a question which I feel Machen neither asked nor answered in his monograph on faith.

And, if Machen errs on the side of propositional exegesis, there is another methodological weakness in his approach, i.e. a narrowness of interest. The point becomes clear as his essay is compared to a work of his contemporary, A. Schlatter,⁸ a work available to Machen. Schlatter's book embraces the entire New Testament witness, showing an exegetical concern for the contribution of each part to the meaning of faith. At the close he includes studies of the word "faith" itself—a herald of *The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, which very work was dedicated to Schlatter. Accordingly, the question, "What is faith?" needs to face important exegetical issues such as: the relation of faith to repentance (the synoptics), faith as both a decisive and growing commitment (the Fourth Gospel), faith as both a standing before God and a style of life (the letters) in-

cluding the significant "gift of faith" to some—not to all—in the church (1 Cor 12:9), the exploits of faith (Hebrews), and the new emphasis in the Pastorals on the deposit of faith. Machen's main exegetical issue in his popular exposition of faith is to reconcile the assumed conflict between Paul and James—quite a minor item when compared to the basic New Testament concerns. Thus, notwithstanding Machen's strong apologetic fervor and total commitment to the Biblical witness, one senses that his book *What Is Faith?* is lacking in exegetical depth.

(3) Machen's monograph, *The Virgin Birth of Christ (VBC)*, appeared shortly after the organization of Westminster Seminary. As hinted at earlier, the work is an expansion of five separate articles by Machen that appeared in the *Princeton Theological Review*. The substance of the book was delivered to students at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia as the Thomas Smyth Lectures (spring of 1927).⁹

VBC is a very thorough work, wide-ranging in scope and careful in detail, a work which the author himself called his *opus magnum*. Machen is firmly committed to the virgin birth as a tenet of faith, yet he attempts to be open to opposing views and to treat opponents with fairness and honesty. Strangely enough, he first discusses belief in the virgin birth in the second Christian century. The opening chapter is, in essence, a reproduction of his article in *PTR* X (1912), pp. 529-580. Machen is adept in his treatment of the early fathers. Texts in the letters of Ignatius,

⁹ The book itself was not actually published until 1930. It rightly belongs, however, to the second period of Machen's literary activity.

⁸ *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament*, Zweite Bearbeitung, 1896.

Justin's *Dialogue with Trypho*, Origen's treatise *Against Celsus*, and Jerome's *Commentary on Matthew* are discussed in detail, showing that belief of the church in the virgin birth extends back into the early years of the second century, and that denials of the virgin birth are based much more probably on dogmatic presuppositions than on genuine historical tradition. In the central part of his work, Machen gives primary attention to the hymns in Luke 1-2 (*VBC*, chapters 2-6). He concludes that the hymns are no artificial production of the Gentile Luke, but are actually to be traced back to Zacharias and Mary, their original composition being in Hebrew or Aramaic. Such a conclusion, says Machen, explains the Old Testament spirit and color and the Hebrew parallelism of strophes such as the hymns reveal.

A minor section in *VBC* is devoted to Matthew's birth narrative (chapter 7 of *VBC*), followed by a consideration of the relation of the nativity accounts to each other, to secular history, and to the rest of the New Testament (*VBC*, chapters 8-11). Finally, the writer considers alternative theories about Jesus' birth (chapters 12-14). A conclusion follows (chapter 15).

That *VBC* is a meticulous work is seen clearly in the way Machen handles patristic evidence, in his textual commentary on Luke 1-2, and in his discussion of textual problems (e.g. Luke 2:22, "their cleansing," *VBC*, pp. 70-74; Luke 2:5, "Mary his betrothed," *VBC*, pp. 123-126; the variant readings of Matt 1:16, *VBC*, pp. 176-187). Similar care is shown in his treatment of interpolation theories, which he finds void of any textual basis (e.g. Luke 1:34-35, *VBC*, chapter VI). Throughout his work, Machen is the apologist, acute-

ly conscious of the serious questions which scholars of his day and earlier have raised over the credibility of the virgin birth. As apologist, Machen is effective. It is doubtful, for example, if Boslooper in his recent work¹⁰ has added any new support to the mythical view of Jesus' birth which Machen so carefully weighed and found wanting. Still the question needs to be raised as to whether Machen, the apologist for the virgin birth, is also the exegete thereof. His painstaking research lays bare the facts, but does he exegete its meaning? What place, for example, does the virgin birth occupy in the Luke-Acts volumes? The answer to the last question must surely take account of the prefaces to Luke (1:1-4) and to Acts (1:1-5). Machen has only a short note on Acts 1, and his few brief references to the preface of Luke have to do only with its skillful literary composition and with its style and structure in contrast with the birth and infancy narrative which follows. The theological importance of the Lukan preface, however, can hardly be overestimated. Luke alludes to "the events which have been brought to full fruition among us." The perfect tense combines with the passive voice (i.e. "have been brought to full fruition") to indicate that God is at work on the scene of human history to bring to fulfillment events of eternal worth.¹¹ The "events" are the births of John and of Jesus, the ministry of Jesus (Luke 4:16ff), his death and resurrection (Luke 24:25-27, 44, 46-47), and the coming of the Holy Spirit and the forma-

¹⁰ Thomas Boslooper, *The Virgin Birth* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1962).

¹¹ See, e.g., O. A. Piper, "The Purpose of Luke," *Union Seminary Review* 57 (Nov. 1945), p. 16.

tion of a new people of God (Acts 2). The fact that at the beginning of Luke's gospel, God acts in a very miraculous way not merely in one birth but in two, points the way to an understanding of the gospel.¹² That is to say, the work of the Holy Spirit in the births of John and Jesus was preparatory not merely to the Spirit's work in Jesus' ministry (Luke 4:17-21) but to the gift of the same Spirit from the risen Lord, making possible another miraculous birth—the birth of the church (Acts 2).¹³

As for Machen's brief chapter on "The Narrative in Matthew," over half of the space is devoted to a discussion of the text of Matt 1:16 with only minor attention given to the genealogy of 1:1-16 and even less to the content of Matt 2. The brief attention which Machen does give to Matt 1:1-16 aims merely to harmonize the genealogical table of Matthew with the table of Luke, a task that fairly bristles with problems which I doubt if Machen has solved. Once again, it is the meaning of Matthew's account that Machen overlooks. For example, why does Matthew "rearrange" his genealogy into three equal divisions? Is it to indicate that Jesus' birth was not by chance but integral to the divine plan, or is it to show that it has some connection with Jewish apocalyptic thinking concerning events inscribed beforehand in the heavenly books?¹⁴ Or does the genealogy suggest the faithfulness of God toward his people through thick and thin, both when they are strong under David as well as when they are wrenched

from their homeland to become helpless exiles in Babylon, destined later to become exploited subjects of a cruel Edomite king, i.e. Herod? In addition, the strange purpose in Matthew's inclusion of four women in his genealogy, three of whom are immoral and one a foreigner from Moab, calls for explanation. Is the presence of the women a harbinger of God's grace (cf. the early patristic explanation)? or does their presence in the genealogy emphasize the fact that God's plan will be fulfilled whatever happens?¹⁵ Or are they mentioned by way of contrast to that other woman in Matthew 1, the one highly favored of God, the virgin Mary? Again, one may ask, do the opening and closing verses of the genealogical table (Matt 1:1, 16) indicate that, for the writer, Jesus Christ is both the *alpha* and *omega* of Jewish history? And, similar to the opening verses of John's gospel on the incarnation (John 1:1, 14; cf. Gen 1:1), does Matthew show in his opening verses (Matt 1:1, 16, 18, 20) that the birth of Jesus through the virgin Mary means essentially the beginning of a new humanity engendered by the Holy Spirit, as Daniélou suggests?¹⁶ Daniélou's suggestion needs to be taken seriously as the Greek text of Matt 1:1 is compared with the LXX of Gen 2:4 and 5:1. One should also compare the work of the Holy Spirit according to both Gen 1:2 and Matt 1:18, 20. And, there is still another question that the exegete of Matthew's account of the virgin birth must face, i.e. how are we to interpret Matthew's amazing selection of Old Testament texts, all of which find their fulfillment—according to Matthew—in

¹² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 20.

¹³ Cf. J. Daniélou, *The Infancy Narratives*, trans. R. Sheed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1968), p. 70.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 12f.

Jesus' birth? If exegesis is concerned with context—and it is—Machen's scholarly monograph on the virgin birth leaves much to be desired.

(C) The third period of Machen's literary work—the thirties—marks the twilight of his life. Quite obviously, the formation and operation of Westminster Seminary as well as continued controversy with the Presbyterian church occupied Machen's time and sapped his energy. Added to these problems were the internal divisions that arose in both the Independent Board and the new Seminary. Understandably, Stonehouse has written, "It is hardly a wonder that Machen was virtually crushed under the burden of the anxieties and labors that were present day and night during the last months of his life."¹⁷ Understandably, also, Machen's literary activity in the thirties subsided. Apart from articles in *The Presbyterian Guardian*, a church paper which Machen personally launched in October of 1935, his literary work is largely confined to two volumes containing addresses given originally during 1935-36 over radio station WIP in Philadelphia. The two volumes are *The Christian Faith in the Modern World* and *The Christian View of Man*. A critique of the former volume follows.

The Christian Faith in the Modern World is a series of essays on Christian doctrine. Machen begins with the question, "How may God be known?"—a question which takes him to the most important revelation of God, i.e. the Bible. From the Bible the author proceeds to discuss God the creator, the triune God, the deity of Christ, Jesus' testimony to himself, his resurrection, and Paul's witness to him, concluding

with a final chapter on the Holy Spirit. The essays thereby show a distinct unity. The writer attempts to speak to ordinary people enmeshed in the crises of the mid-thirties—tyranny in Russia, the arms race in Germany and Italy, and the threat to civil and religious liberty which Machen sensed existing in the United States. It is clear, however, that the "crises" which Machen mentions in his introduction play little if any part in his doctrinal treatment. What then does Machen say in the closing years of his life, and, once again, how are we to evaluate his role as apologist and exegete of the Christian faith?

He claims quite forthrightly that Christian faith in the Bible, in God, and in Christ stands firm amid the onslaught of unbelief. The Bible is verbally inspired; God the creator is revealed to us in three persons; Jesus is the Son of God, the Lord, and hence the object of faith; and the witness of the gospels to the supernatural Christ is corroborated by the testimony of the apostle Paul. Echoes of Machen's literary activity of the nineteen twenties meet the reader of each essay on every page. Machen presents the Christian faith simply and categorically in order to show that Christian convictions are essential to Christian living. It makes a great deal of difference, he says, what a person believes. To illustrate, he appeals to Paul Bourget's novel, *The Disciple*. Bourget describes the peaceful routine life of an inoffensive philosopher who "wouldn't hurt a fly," who welcomes students and scholars to his humble domicile several times a week for instruction. The philosopher's quiet life, however, is unexpectedly shattered. He is summoned to a criminal inquest at which one of his former pupils, a brilliant and enthusiastic disciple, is

¹⁷ Stonehouse, p. 505.

accused of murder. Now in prison, the disciple writes an autobiography for his master to see, a tragic story of how the liberating doctrines of the philosopher's teaching culminated in the awesome crime which the disciple committed. So it is, said Machen, with the doctrines of Modernism and Liberalism. They have their own tragic issues in both public and private life in that civil and religious liberty are now threatened. "This notion that doctrine is unimportant and that life comes first, is one of the most devilish errors that are to be found in the whole of Satan's arsenal" (p. 97). Throughout the volume Machen concentrates on Christian doctrine with, at best, a minor emphasis on Christian living.

Now, however, I raise the question as to whether Machen has produced anything more than a bare skeleton of Christian doctrine which needs the flesh and blood of exegesis. Machen emphasizes historical facticity but the New Testament reveals the twin emphases of the historical Jesus and the dynamic of the Spirit. That is to say, facts will remain sterile and inert unless somehow they are interrelated and interpreted by the Holy Spirit. Machen's treatment tends to be little more than an expanded Apostles' Creed, and he is often pessimistic as to whether his hearers and readers can truthfully confess their faith in the creed. "I want not only to clear away misconceptions from your minds, as to what we believe, but I want to win some of you" (p. 36). "You say . . . how could God determine the very words that these men wrote . . . ? Well, my friend, I will tell you how" (pp. 53f). "When you say that the Bible is a true guide in religion, but that you do not care whether it is a true guide when it deals

with history or with science, I should just like to ask you one question" (p. 55). "Well, my friend, you have turned to the Sermon on the Mount. I did not choose it. You chose it. It is your favorite passage . . . All right, then; we are going to . . . examine the Sermon on the Mount for ourselves. What happens to us when we do that? I will tell you very plainly" (p. 162). "You say, my friend, that you have never seen a man who rose from the dead . . . ? Quite right. Neither have I . . . But what of it?" (p. 214).

The above quotations are merely a sampling of Machen's characteristic rhetorical method. If society and the church in society were sick unto death—and for Machen they were—one is inclined to ask somewhat whimsically whether Machen's "bedside manner" could in any way effect an improvement in the patient's condition.

But beyond the skeletal nature of the book and its "chip-on-the-shoulder" style, what troubles me most is Machen's lack of complete candor in explaining the doctrines he has chosen to treat. Lack of candor—what a strange thing to say about Machen! But I mention two emphases by way of example. First, with regard to Jesus' resurrection, Machen is quite insistent that the resurrection appearances occurred initially not in Galilee but in Jerusalem. That is to say, he takes his stance in the primitive Jerusalem tradition held by Paul (cf. also John and Luke), but he fails to consider the Galilean tradition found in Mark and Matthew. The point at issue is not the resurrection *per se*, nor even the clear witness given in the New Testament to appearances of the risen Jesus. The issue is that for Machen to argue vigorously in support of Paul's testimony in 1 Cor 15 and to

fail to take seriously Mark 16 and Matt. 28, is to be less than honest with the sources and to leave the thoughtful reader with disturbing questions concerning the consistency of the Biblical material. A second emphasis pertains to Machen's treatment of the source criticism of the gospels. It is doubtful if Machen ever came to terms with the synoptic research of his day. In his earlier writings as well as in the radio essays, the reader encounters the phrase, "the sources supposed rightly or wrongly to underlie the Synoptic Gospels." One might expect Machen to define "rightly or wrongly" and to bring the synoptic problem into focus. Let us assume that he did deal with this problem in his teaching at Princeton and Westminster; but neither his scholarly nor his popular works reveal that he even tried to resolve the problem. Instead, he actually affirms that the famous "two-document" theory has become the basis for the account of a purely human Jesus who worked no miracles but simply taught by life and word the Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man. Machen thereby reduced source-criticism to a straw man and failed to deal openly and honestly with serious research. To claim that the gospel of Mark and an unknown document "Q" are the two main sources that lie behind the first three gospels, in no way of itself marks a liberal approach to the gospels. It reveals rather an effort to understand the obvious relationships that exist between the three accounts. Evangelicals (belatedly) as well as liberals have accepted literary criticism as both a helpful and an indispensable tool for an understanding of the Synoptics. Machen knew this. He appreciated, for example, the evangelical position of James Denney; and yet Denney was

firm in his support of the two-document theory.¹⁸ Briefly, *Christian Faith in the Modern World* impresses me as the work of a tired, harassed man, strong in a simplistic defensive posture, but weak in exegetical prowess.

Conclusion. The above critique of Machen's literary works lays no claim to completeness.¹⁹ It deals not with Machen's personal, academic, or ecclesiastical life²⁰ but with what he wrote. Yet, I have been impressed by two de-

¹⁸ See, e.g. J. Denney, *Jesus and the Gospel—Christianity justified in the mind of Christ* (New York: A. C. Armstrong and Son, 1909), pp. 156-177; and cf. *Christian Faith in the Modern World*, p. 155.

¹⁹ It is doubtful, however, whether a consideration of Machen's other popular works will alter the basic critique given in this essay. Compare Machen's *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1923); *The Christian View of Man* (New York: Macmillan, 1937), *God Transcendent and other Selected Sermons*, ed. Ned Stonehouse (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1949), and *What is Christianity? And Other Addresses*, ed. Ned Stonehouse (1951). To complete this survey, two final popular productions of Machen should be mentioned; (1) Sunday School lessons which Machen wrote for the Presbyterian Board of Publication and Sabbath School Work. Originally published in 1916, the lessons have been recently edited and re-issued under the title, *The New Testament, An Introduction to its Literature and History*, ed. W. John Cook (Glasgow: R. MacLehose & Co. Ltd., 1976). (2) Expository notes on Galatians 1:1-3:14 which appeared originally in the early *Christianity Today* (from Jan. 1931 to Feb. 1933) but which were edited and published in 1977 by John H. Skilton under the title, *Machen's Notes on Galatians* (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co.). The notes emphasize historical exegesis and suggest that the apostasy in the Galatian churches is reflected—so says Machen—in the apostasy in the Presbyterian church.

²⁰ I refer the reader to C. Allyn Russell's penetrating article, "J. Gresham Machen, Scholarly Fundamentalist" in *The Journal of Presbyterian History* 51 (1973), 40-69.

scriptions of his life which Ned Stonehouse has given. At the beginning of his biography, Stonehouse emphasizes Machen's forthright courage, describing him as Mr. Valiant-for-Truth (from *Pilgrim's Progress*). Later, however, the biographer reflects quite honestly on the reason why outstanding men such as Craig, Allis, and Macartney parted company with Machen in the closing years of his life. The reason, says Stonehouse, was Machen's bent to precipitous action—a failure to communicate with his colleagues, thereby allowing them to share fully in his convictions and hence possibly to influence or change his purpose or plan of action. Stonehouse's observations are helpful in bringing this critique to a close. Machen's scholarly works, *The Origin of Paul's Religion* and *The Virgin Birth of Christ*, reveal a writer who is "Mr. Valiant-for-Truth." Machen is the apologist who marshals his arguments carefully as he contends vigorously that Paul's religion is indeed based on a supernatural Christ and that this Christ was indeed born of the virgin Mary. Machen is an apologist and a courageous one at that. And for this very reason I am drawn to him. Yet I am drawn only partway, for, to defend the faith does not inevitably mean to interpret the faith. Stonehouse writes that Machen *was* an exegete and that in his classroom the letter to the Galatians, for example, became "alive and relevant."²¹ But this is precisely

what I do not see in Machen's extant works, and thus I feel short-changed. Allyn Russell claims that Machen was more successful as an apologist than as an ecclesiastical politician. To this claim I would add that he was more successful as an apologist than as an exegete. For what Stonehouse has said about Machen's lack of a close relationship with trusted colleagues may be said about his literary relationship with his readers. In order for his readers—student and scholar alike—to share fully in his faith in the Scriptures, Machen needed to communicate with them by interpreting those Scriptures to them through the scholarly acumen and Christian devotion with which he was so admirably equipped.

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²¹ Stonehouse, p. 171.

Preaching as Confluence

by CONRAD H. MASSA

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Inaugural Address, December 6, 1978

GEORGE PEPPER, in his Lyman Beecher Lectures, said, "To essay lectures upon preaching is an act of courage. To believe that God may find use for them is an act of faith."¹ An Inaugural Lecture provides the opportunity for one to identify some basic concerns in the field of inquiry and also to reflect critically on certain present practices. This effort to do such may demonstrate more courage and faith than wisdom for, after all, what is there to be said about a subject in which everyone present is an expert? Everyone knows what preaching is—or at least what it ought to be. The trouble is that when we test that assumption, it soon becomes clear that preaching is like pornography in that while no one can define it satisfactorily to others, everyone knows it when he or she hears it!

Clergy who are not parish ministers may have very clear theoretical understandings of preaching which are usually related in terms of their own professional specialties. Parish ministers suspect that this certainty is the result of what Mordecai Kaplan once called in another context "the immaculate conception of thought not sired by experience." Parish ministers confess a confusion about the place of preaching in

the context of their whole ministry. The difficulties of the preaching task and the uncertainties about why they have to do it weekly combine to make a heavy burden out of what is sometimes called the freedom of the pulpit. Strange freedom this necessity!

Any serious consideration of preaching needs to deal with three fundamental questions:

Why do we preach? What is the impetus for it?

What *is* preaching? What is the purpose of it?

How do we do it?

The main part of this lecture will be given to the second question, *What is preaching?* Before we come to that, however, we will say something in regard to each of the others.

The question of *how* we do preaching includes the matters of biblical exegesis, theological reflection, logical development of ideas, and effective expression of thoughts both written and oral. These matters are inevitably related to, and the outgrowth of, why we do preaching and what we understand preaching to be. The "how to" questions are exceedingly important because they lead to the ultimate fruition of preaching without which it remains mere theory. They are the flesh and

¹ *A Voice From The Crowd*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1915, p. 30.

blood of our answers to the other questions. A responsible theological school which seeks to equip men and women for the pastorate must provide for the teaching of "how to preach" because preaching remains the most regularly performed public act of ministry.

The "how to" questions have troubled clergy for many centuries as just one illustration plucked from the history of the subject will illustrate. A study of Franciscan preaching² reveals that between the years 1226 and 1536 there were 200 Franciscans who produced 345 works in homiletics. Of these, 129 were printed in 535 editions comprising 363,535 copies. One of the most popular was that of John of Werden (d. 1437) who called his book, *Dormi Secure* or "Sleep Without Care." The sub-title reads, "Sermons for Saints' Days throughout the year, very notable and useful to all priests, prelates, and chaplains . . . seeing that they can easily be incorporated without great study and preached to the people."³ The work is reported to have gone through eighty-nine editions in less than a century. Concerns about how to do preaching are obviously not of recent origin. A theological seminary has the obligation to teach its students how to do their preparation *responsibly*.

The question, "Why do we preach?" draws us inexorably into our understanding of the church and its ministry. What kind of church are we? Are we

a church focused on a liturgical celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation? Are we a church focused on mediating between God and humankind in the drama of the Mass? Or are we a church focused on God's self-proclaimed revelation in his living Word? Are we a proclaiming church? But more, are we convinced that the verbal articulation of the Gospel is of the *essence* of the church and not merely a useful accompaniment to the doing of the Gospel?

This question has been the major theological issue in the *life* of the United Presbyterian Church—and some others as well—for the past two decades. Preaching has tended to be reduced to a rationalization for what we thought the church ought to be doing in the world. We have surrendered our identity as a proclaiming church in order to be a demonstrating church. We expressed our apprehension about the self-authenticating Word and replaced it with the supposedly self-authenticating Deed. We were surprised when those within our congregations, to say nothing of those without, did not perceive the Deed to be self-authenticating. Congregations sensed that something essential had been lost and lines were drawn between those who believed in evangelism and those who believed in social action, between "meddling in politics" and "preaching the Gospel." The distinctions were, of course, crude simplifications by which each side tried to justify its own emphasis.

My own career of almost twenty-five years in the ministry includes ample testimony to my involvement in some of the most controversial issues of the times. What I say here is not to depreciate the demonstrating church which lives out the Gospel. This is not to

² Anscar Zawart, "The History of Franciscan Preaching and of Franciscan Preachers (1209-1927): A Bio-bibliographical Study," in the Franciscan Educational Conference, *Report of the Ninth Annual Meeting*, vol. IX, no. 9 (September, 1927), pp. 374-375.

³ *Life in the Middle Ages*, Selected, translated and annotated by G. G. Coulton, vol. I, Cambridge: At the University Press, 1928, p. 232.

justify a false dichotomy but to identify developments. We cannot answer the question why we preach unless we are willing to confront the issue whether or not we believe the verbal articulation of the Gospel is of the essence of our nature as a proclaiming church. How shall we exegete Paul's question: "How are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14)

This raises parallel considerations for the ministry of the church. I cannot remember when I last heard a candidate, who was to come under the care of a Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, say that he or she felt called to preach the Gospel. In this day it seems we are called simply "to minister." We are ordained to what is termed the "professional ministry" and the variety of responsibilities for which Presbyteries willingly ordain persons is, to me, staggering. I refrain from examples at this point because I already have more enemies than I need! While the Book of Order still identifies those who are "ministers of the Word" in some places, our constitutional status is that of "Continuing members of the Presbytery." My wife has a more expressive relationship than that; she is an honorary lifetime member of the P.T.A.

What does it mean to be called to be a minister of the Gospel? If ordination is simply the recognition that one is to perform a function within the church, then let us ordain to whatever functions we will, but let us restrict the ministry of that person to the function for which he or she has been ordained. Let us stop the depreciation of the concept "Minister of the Word" which we bring about when we called every func-

tionary a preacher! Involved in any answer to the question, Why do we preach? must be some concept that one feels *called* to preach; or else we will continue to have a stream of technicians who know the mechanics of the job but who do not have the creative urge to make it what it must be. How shall we exegete Paul's question: "How can they preach unless they are sent?" (Romans 10:15) and his own affirmation: "For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel . . . I am entrusted with a commission." (I Corinthians 9:16-17) Our understanding of the church and its ministry is crucial to our understanding of why we preach.

We turn now to the question, *What is preaching?* The question is deceptively simple, but it has been the concern of Christian thinking about preaching since at least the third century. Here we must review some of the early history of preaching. There was, of course, the exposition-exhortation to the assemblies of the faithful, usually in the context of the breaking of bread. There was also the proclamation of the good news of Jesus Christ in the synagogues and marketplaces. It was at that point in the history of the church when Christians worshipped openly so that non-believers could be part of the congregation, and when the church relaxed the stringent requirements for long catechumenate periods, that the preacher faced the perplexing task of being both a missionary (in the form of an apologist) and a teacher and exhorter at the same time. It was then that a distinction grew between form and content—a distinction which has set the terms of the discussion for centuries.

The first Christian preachers interpreted the scriptures from their Chris-

to-centric viewpoint and they hardly needed formal rhetoric to exhort the little groups of Christians. As Christian preachers came into greater contact with the Greek and Latin-speaking Gentile world, we find growing evidence to their attention to the form of the message. Bultmann and others identified what they believed to be a stylistic resemblance between certain parts of the New Testament epistles and the Stoic diatribe.⁴ It should be noted that the great Stoic philosopher, Epictetus, was among those forced to leave Rome when the Emperor Domitian banished all philosophers from that city about A.D. 90.

Once we go beyond the New Testament and the first century, the influence of Greek Rhetoric on Christian preaching is indisputable. Between the New Testament and the work of Origen in the third century there are only two sermons extant. Unfortunately we have no sermons from Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Polycarp, Tertullian, or Irenaeus. One we do have is *The Homily on the Passion* by Melito, Bishop of Sardis. It gives full evidence of the influence of Greek Rhetoric upon Christian preaching in the East by A.D. 170. This work, identified only in 1930,⁵ sets the *known* beginning of "stylized Christian oratory."

The influence of Greek Rhetoric became pervasive in the third and fourth centuries. Basil, Gregory and Chrysos-

tom were pupils of the outstanding pagan Sophist, Libanius. In their later years they attacked Sophistic Rhetoric, but they could not escape its influence on their preaching. In one of Basil's sermons he stops to say

Now do not laugh at the homeliness of my diction, for we do not approve of your high-spun phrases and care not a jot for your harmonious arrangements. Our writers do not waste their time in polishing periods. We prefer clarity of expression to mere euphony.⁶

It is indicative of the influence of his rhetorical training, however, that Basil should phrase this denial in a carefully constructed chiasmus: a subtle form of parallelism which reverses the elements in the preceding clause to avoid monotony while retaining symmetry. The danger against which conscientious preachers struggled was the danger that preaching would be reduced to style alone. That this should even have become a concern indicates how quickly the simple exposition of scripture or the missionary message became a much more complicated question when the Church really moved out into the world. Once the relatively simple story of Jesus had been told again and again, what was preaching to become?

When C. H. Dodd⁷ isolated for us elements of the original *kerygma*, the core of the apostolic preaching, he con-

⁴ R. Leijss, S.I., "Predication Des Apotres," in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique*, Tome LXIX, 1947.

⁵ Edited by Campbell Bonner (Studies and Documents, XII), London: Christophers and Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1940. For a full description of the Codex see Campbell Bonner, *The Last Chapters of Enoch in Greek*, pp. 2-12 (Studies and Documents, VIII).

⁶ Campbell, James M., *The Influence of the Second Sophistic on the Style of the Sermons of St. Basil the Great*. (The Catholic University of American Patristic Studies, Vol. II), Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1922, p. 146.

⁷ *The Apostolic Preaching And Its Developments*, New York and London: Harper and Brothers, 1954. (First published in 1936.)

vinced us that we cannot preach just what Paul did. What meaning would it have for our congregations if we stressed that Christ "was born of the seed of David?" How can we say that "the prophecies are fulfilled, and the new Age is inaugurated by the coming of Christ" when our hearers know and care little about prophecies which are no part of their immediate heritage, when they have an entirely different conception as to what a "new Age" means, and when we are not preaching at the time of the inauguration of this Age, but nineteen centuries later!

This problem with the content of the message was also recognized early in the history of Christian preaching. Origen, in the first half of the third century, stressed the literal interpretation of biblical history and events whenever that was possible. However, it was he who gave the rationale and defense to allegorical interpretation. So strong was this impetus that the medieval preacher was *expected* to find at least four and, preferably seven, senses in *every* passage of Scripture. The method of interpretation which Origen employed, like the method of presentation which Chrysostom used, was at the time a meaningful way to communicate the Gospel. R. M. Grant has observed

The allegorical method, at a critical moment in Christian history, made it possible to uphold the rationality of Christian faith. It was used to prevent obscurantism. And though we question not only its assumptions but also its results, we must not forget what we owe to it.⁸

Similarly, another scholar has observed of the rhetorical style of Chrysostom

⁸ *The Bible in the Church*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1948.

The refined and cultured audiences of Antioch and Constantinople would have ignored a preacher whose exposition of doctrine was devoid of the graces and embellishments of language which they prized so highly. The heretics and infidels, who were either to be refuted or won over to the truth, would have scorned and ridiculed him.⁹

These early attempts to adapt both the content and the form of Christian preaching to the needs of the times set the pattern for centuries to come. However that pattern was given explicit attention by Augustine in his *On Christian Doctrine*. Augustine began this work in 397 but left it unfinished at chapter 25 of the third book.¹⁰ Rome fell in 410. From 413 to 426 Augustine worked on his *City of God*. It indicates something of the importance he attached to preaching that after such an historical upheaval he should have returned in 426 to the completion of book three and book four which is essentially the first Christian manual of preaching. Books one to three of *On Christian Doctrine* deal with the interpretation and understanding of Scripture while book four deals with the communication of this understanding. The work was so significant that it was referred to and used in other writings in the sixth and ninth centuries. It was commended by Bonaventure and Thomas

⁹ Ameringer, Thomas E., "The Stylistic Influence of the Second Sophistic On the Panegyric Sermons of St. John Chrysostom," *A Study In Greek Rhetoric* (The Catholic University of America Patristic Studies, Vol. V). Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1921.

¹⁰ NPNF, First Series, vol. II; The Fathers of the Church, vol. IV. See Augustine, *Retractions*, book II, chap. 4.

Aquinas. In the Renaissance it was the first work of a Church Father to be printed. About 1465 two editions of book four appeared in Germany under the title, *The Art of Preaching*. Most significant for us, however, is that Augustine's aims for preaching, taken from Cicero, continued to be given as the aims of preaching as late as 1937 in American homiletics.¹¹

Augustine ignored centuries of Sophistic Rhetoric and went back instead to the injunctions of Cicero who said of the orator: "To teach is a necessity, to delight is a beauty, to persuade is a triumph." However, what tended for Cicero to be three aims or functions of the orator, became for Augustine three types of style, no one of which is an end in itself. Augustine comments that the truth alone is rarely enough to persuade and move, so the preacher follows through the whole process of instructing, pleasing and persuading. "The teaching, which is a matter of necessity, depends on what we say; the other two on the way we say it." The Ciceronian aims, reinterpreted by Augustine, thus became the essential definition of the purpose of Christian preaching for the next fifteen hundred years!

To teach, to please, to persuade—this was what preaching had to do. To be sure the content given in the rhetorical form was to be the Gospel of Jesus Christ, however interpreted. The form, though, was not shaped—or judged—by Christian theology. It was available for any kind of secular or sacred use. The General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in 1960, heard a speaker tell them that the functions of radio and television broadcasting were

to inform, to entertain, and to sell. Cicero on Madison Avenue!¹² Little wonder that seminary professors in the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries took pains in their Inaugural addresses and other writings to explain the difference between "Sacred Rhetoric" and just plain "Rhetoric." The difference usually came down to the sacred content of the message and the sacred calling of the speaker. Never was the question of the applicability of the aims of pagan rhetoric to Christian preaching challenged directly. Throughout all this period many things were said about the person of the speaker or preacher, and even about the place of the Holy Spirit. *But the essential legacy given to us was a definition of preaching in terms of the form and content of the sermon.* What this permitted was an understanding of preaching wherein the content could easily be separated from the aim and purpose.

Professor Ovid Sellers devoted his inaugural address as Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis at McCormick Theological Seminary in 1924 to the topic, *Hebrew and Homiletics*. He offered it as "an apology for the existence of the department of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegesis in a progressive 20th Century Christian Theological Seminary."¹³ As part of his apology for Hebrew, he gave the need for understanding the problems of biblical criticism as well as the text and commentaries. During the 1920's few preachers were stressing the bible in their sermons. Still they went right on

¹¹ Andrew W. Blackwood, *The Fine Art of Preaching*, New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937, p. 22.

¹² Speech by Thomas Bostic, Mayor of Yakima, Washington and President of Cascade Broadcasting Co. May 21, 1960.

¹³ Published in pamphlet form. Copy in Speer Library of Princeton Theological Seminary.

preaching: teaching, pleasing and persuading! The Trade Lists of 1925 show that twice as many single volumes of sermons were published as in 1900. Whereas the statements on preaching of Luther and Calvin had thrown the emphasis on the almost autonomous Word of God, historical development was to show that the form could be just as autonomous as the content. *Never have we developed a wholistic concept of preaching!*

But preaching is far more than the form and content of a sermon. Preaching is a complicated event which has four significant human components. These are:

The one who speaks.

Those who hear what is said.

That which is said (its form and content).

The social/cultural milieu in which something is said by the one to the several.

In other words there is a preacher, a congregation, a sermon, and a particular context of time, place and circumstance. It is an error to formulate an understanding of *what preaching is* which does not include *all four* of these components. Anything else is partial. It may be possible to analyze each of these components separately under principles of exegesis, principles of communication, and a theology of the Word. But it is impossible then to simply put them all in juxtaposition and have an adequate understanding of preaching. Preaching must be understood as an organic event in which these four components are so intermingled as to be partly indistinguishable. The preacher is not merely one who "delivers" the sermon; the preacher also *is* the sermon, the personification of this expression of

faith. The sermon is not simply the biblical-theological content, but it is this as filtered through a particular preacher and as perceived by a member of the congregation in terms of his or her personal life situation which, in turn, is part of the general social context.

Such a dynamic event as preaching can only be described by an image which itself conveys the idea of multiplicity in one. The image I would suggest is the image of *Preaching As Confluence*. The word confluence has three meanings—all of them germane to this concept of preaching. Confluence is a flowing together of two or more streams. Confluence is their place of junction. Confluence is the body of water so formed. The *source* of preaching is confluence, the flowing together of the four streams: preacher, congregation, sermon, context. The *event* of preaching is confluence—their place of junction. The *result* of preaching is confluence—the new body of experience so formed by this coming together.

While we could produce many examples, from Augustine on, of those who have recognized the existence of these four components of the preaching situation, the components have always been analyzed as more or less distinct. My suggestion here is that such an approach cannot define for us the essence of preaching which depends on the absolute intermingling of the four components. We need a hermeneutic approach which is able to cope with this. Because we have continued to make an analytical distinction of the components of the preaching event, we continue to say or do things which to me are unacceptable.

One of these is the claim that there is some autonomous, external Word of

God, unconditioned historically, which speaks to the preacher and through him or her to the congregation. Karl Barth's doctrine of the Word gave a theological certainty to preachers, but at the cost of reality in a practical sense.¹⁴ Helmut Thielicke's comment is to the point when he says, "Our word in the sermon merely shares the fateful impotency of all other words."¹⁵ It may even be possible to suggest that the Word of God forms itself through the shaping of human existence which takes place in the confluence of which we have been speaking so that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, this confluence becomes a particular actualization of the Word of God.

A second thing unacceptable to me is that the preacher should be a passive participant in the preaching event's most significant decision. The preacher is such when he or she permits the lectionary to choose the scriptural text for the sermon. The increased use of the lectionary as a basis for preaching in the Reformed tradition is symptomatic of the decline of the preacher as an active theologian. When the preacher has no sense of what the Word of the Lord needs to be, he can always fall back on what cycle A says is the Word for this week. But the words of Amos on the lips of Hosea are not the Word of God to his people. When the preacher relies on cycle A to tell her what to say, that preacher has already surrendered *the* most significant theological decision she is called upon to make, namely, what *is* the Word of God for this people, this

week? After the preacher has made that decision, everything else is "how to." How to exegete it, organize it, express it! But a perfect exegesis, even exposition, of the wrong Scripture for the time is a case of preaching the Bible rather than preaching the Gospel.

The preacher is responsible before God to see that the necessary confluence takes place as the rushing streams of the culture, the individual lives of the congregation members, the faith experience of the preacher, and the reality of Jesus Christ *meet* at that moment of junction which is the preaching event. The preacher cannot guarantee what the results of that confluence will be. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. The preacher is responsible to be an active theologian who provides two of the necessary components to the confluence: himself/herself as a faith-person and a carefully thought through presentation of the Gospel. We do not, then, even come close to a definition of preaching in terms of teaching or persuading. You cannot define this swirling together in confluence. You experience it; and when you have, you say, "That is preaching!"

This is an insecure, even frightening position to be in as a preacher. It is the kind of experience which W. H. Auden describes about the poet. If, in the following passage you think "preacher" and "sermon" where Auden says "poet" and "poem" you will get some sense of what preaching as confluence implies.

He will never be able to say: "Tomorrow I will write a poem and, thanks to my training and experience, I already know I shall do a good job." In the eyes of others a man is a poet if he has written one good poem. In his own he is only a poet at the mo-

¹⁴ See *Theology of the Liberating Word*, edited by Frederick Herzog, chap. II, "From the Word to the Words" by Hans-Dieter Bastian, pp. 46-75, Nashville-New York: Abingdon Press, 1971.

¹⁵ Ibid. p. 49. (Quoted)

ment when he is making his last revision to a new poem. The moment before, he was still only a potential poet; the moment after, he is a man who has ceased to write poetry, perhaps forever.¹⁶

I do not expect that everyone has agreed with all that has been said in this lecture. As a matter of fact, I would be disappointed if all did! I have tried to indicate that some basic assumptions

¹⁶ *The Dyer's Hand and other essays*, New York: Random House, 1962, p. 41.

about preaching must be reopened to investigation and that present practices need continually to be evaluated. Most of all it is my concern to demonstrate that a Seminary of the Reformed tradition needs to provide not only for the practice of preaching, but also for continuing reflection on the history and interpretation of this event which is the most cogent reminder in the life of the Church that the Word of God must always be a living Word to *this* generation.

The Minister's Theological Responsibility*

by SEWARD HILTNER

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THREE factors in my experience of recent years have led me to focus this discussion on the minister's theological responsibility. These are, first, my work in the Doctor of Ministry program; second, some recent acquaintance with the standard examination in theology of the United Presbyterian Church; and third, my efforts in several courses to teach the theological dimensions of pastoral care.

In the D.Min. program it was soon discovered that this generally able and talented group of ministers had done very little to cultivate theological reflection on their actual experiences of ministry. Whether the ministry event under consideration was a pastoral call, a sermon, the course of a meeting, or a stewardship campaign, the theological comments about it tended toward superficiality in most instances, and sometimes even to irrelevance. If the event reported was a pastoral call on someone who appeared resistive to help, the theological remarks might be only that the person needed to love, or to accept

the love of God in Jesus Christ. Seldom was the theological understanding of love used to show exactly why such human resistances are so deep and difficult to overcome. When I made such a point in a workshop discussion, the ministers seemed glad to have it. But the next report was likely to be little better theologically than the first. I came to assume, therefore, that we were dealing not mainly with lack of knowledge but with resistance, a kind of resistance that the persons themselves did not know they had.

Later experience has tended to confirm this theory. Somehow and somewhere most ministers have come to regard theology as a kind of magic helper, usually elusive, but capable of reinforcing one's ministry efforts if only one can hit on the correct positive note. The fact is of course that bringing to bear on a situation the most relevant theological insights may show that what one has been attempting needs not reinforcement but criticism. It is significant that several of these ministers I have known have begun to gain ability to reflect theologically on their experiences only after being shaken by a reflection

* Address given at the Opening Convocation of the 1978-79 academic year at Princeton Theological Seminary.

of this kind emerging in a workshop discussion.

The second factor that has influenced my choice of topic is the standard Presbyterian examination in theology. In this examination the questions are posed in situational form. The candidate is not evaluated in terms of the theological content of his or her position, but for ability to relate theological resources or issues to the situation as described. Let me suggest the principles that seem to be operating here.

First, the candidate's theological ability is distinguished from any type of predetermined content position. Concomitantly, the freedom to take one position or another is not regarded as antithetical to theological ability. No doubt some positions taken by candidates strain the patience of examiners. But so long as a candidate seems to be on the road to some kind of Christian position, that effort is respected; and what is measured is the candidate's awareness of the resources being used in the process.

Second, when asked to articulate something of a theological nature that may shed light on the situation posed, the candidate is free to select his or her theological data from biblical, doctrinal, ethical, historical or other sources depending on his or her judgment of their relevance. At least in principle, this view renounces the notion that there is some master theological discipline from which all others are derivative. Thus the multiperspectival nature of theology itself seems to be espoused.

The third factor leading me to this topic has been my own teaching experience in pastoral care, attempting to help students to relate theological resources and issues to their experiences in pastoral care. To make progress

along this line, I have found that there is no substitute for theological analysis of the student's own reports. From these teaching experiences let me add only one point of insight, namely, helping the student to a proper relationship between involvement and reflection.

Some students in pastoral care are inclined to believe, at first, that if theology is relevant then it follows that there will be a theological talk with the parishioner. Since that may sometimes be true, I am of course careful not to negate the idea entirely. But the fact is that theological reflection by the student is of great importance even when it may not at this time be appropriate to have explicit God talk with the parishioner. Understanding this is not easy for some students. They may have caught a vision of what it means to begin to help another human being. So they are tempted to over-value involvement. To stand aside and detached, and to ask from theological perspectives just what has taken place, may appear cold as against the warmth of the actual relationship. But it may be just as important for long term helping to become a reality.

All Christians have a ministry, not only those who are ordained or professional, and that ministry includes some kind and degree of theological responsibility. But if the "pastoral directors," as H. Richard Niebuhr called them, are not exercising theological responsibility, it is altogether likely that no one is.

The discussion will be in three sections. First, what theological responsibility means. Second, the nature of the minister's theological responsibility. Third, the Seminary's task in fostering theological responsibility among ministers.

I

The prerequisite to theology is a community of faith. Without the community, reflection would be philosophy not theology. Without the faith, it could as easily be detachment as commitment.

A community of faith does not, however, automatically produce theology. It may only restate its heritage in the language that appeared at the time of its formation. Theology appears only when two additional steps are undertaken: first, translation of the heritage across time and circumstance; second, seriously inquiring about possible discrepancies between the basic faith and interpretations put upon it in the interim. When all three processes are in operation, there is theology.

Appropriate translation requires some degree of expert knowledge; but its touchstone is the involvement/detachment tension already noted. Understanding of a biblical text should be within its own frame of reference, historical circumstances, and author's bent. Granted the intent of the text in its own setting, however, is there clarifying explanation of how, if at all, that point transcends time and circumstance? If the topic is Jesus Christ as God/man in the formula of Chalcedon, is there attempt to show the values that the Chalcedonian Council was trying to protect in face of inevitably serious criticisms of the adequacy of Chalcedonian language for today's understanding of Jesus Christ?

Let me go one step further with the formula of Chalcedon, especially since a good deal of recent work on Christology has tried to translate it in new ways. Although some of these efforts are more promising than others, none has won much acceptance. In my opin-

ion, most of the new formulations tend to take too lightly the inherently paradoxical nature of the Chalcedonian intent. A real paradox may be clarified but it cannot be solved or eliminated. Over-emphasis on detachment may take the paradox too lightly. On the other side, over-emphasis on involvement may resist entirely the effort to translate Chalcedon into terms that are comprehensible today.

The third ingredient needed to produce theology by a community of faith is inquiry, which proceeds both by critique and construction. While respecting the faith, its critique expresses skepticism about the understanding of the faith on the part both of our ancestors and ourselves. The construction is partly translation as already described, but also testing the faith against contemporary circumstances, which may in important respects be different from those of the past. In inquiry also there is properly a tension between involvement and detachment. Over-involvement destroys serious inquiry, but a focus on detachment alone may forget that even the most rigorous inquiry is undertaken within the context of a community of faith.

If theology is a reflective activity of the community of faith that includes appreciation, translation, and inquiry, what, then, is theological responsibility within that community? I suggest that it means a proper exercise of all three of these functions at all times, even when there appear on occasion to be severe tensions among them.

It is clear that a community lacking appreciation of what is central in its heritage could have, at best, an episodic kind of theology with no clear criteria for curbing its eclecticism. It would, therefore, lack responsibility in relation

to its heritage. If a community valued its faith and heritage, but denigrated the need for translation of it for contemporary understanding, it would invite a combination of obscurantism and idolatry. And if both heritage and translation were taken seriously, but inquiry shunted aside, it would not be long until the test of faith became believing six impossible things before breakfast, as Lewis Carroll put it. In such situations, theological responsibility would be subverted by selective inattention to ingredients that are essential to theology itself.

The actual exercise of theological responsibility by a community, however, is not guaranteed by the fact that some attention is paid to all the principal factors. So long as they seem to be mutually reinforcing, that may appear to be true. But what happens when they are in conflict? The nineteenth century's controversies over slavery illustrate this situation. The New Testament discussion of slavery as an institution is, at best, equivocal. Should it be translated to mean subservience by slaves? Or would critical inquiry question the very base of slavery as an institution? There appear to be occasions when theological responsibility requires that inquiry win over heritage and translation, as the latter have previously been conceived. After the battle, however, there needs to be reconception of the heritage and a new framework for its translation. Today's liberation theologians regard themselves as at a similar polemical point in the struggle. Whether they can win a victory, as did the opponents of slavery, and then return to appreciation and translation of the heritage, remains to be seen.

There are no general and infallible standards by which we can judge the

degree to which a community is exercising theological responsibility. It is clear, however, that such standards must be equally aware of the specific needs in the actual contemporary situation and of the basic message of the faith.

II

As coordinator of a particular community, the minister is to ensure that general theological responsibility, as previously set forth, is exercised in that community. Not all the community's responsibility is to be carried out by the minister himself or herself. That is why the notion of the minister as theologian in residence may be misleading; for if you may have a theologian around, you may also not have one. Further, if the minister is acting as theologian only when unengaged in program duties, then the reflective and detached aspect of theology is over-emphasized at the expense of involvement in necessary activities and ministries. Nothing should cloud the fact that it is finally the community that bears theological responsibility.

Bearing general responsibility is not, however, the same thing as possessing the special knowledge and competence that presumably go along with the minister's education and vocation. It is legitimate, therefore, for the community to look to the minister for theological leadership. Certainly that should imply the minister's schooling the community at appropriate levels, on how to exercise its theological responsibility. But the minister would be copping out if he or she confined theological reflection to the level that could easily be taught to the people. Being one lesson ahead in the textbook is hardly enough.

The minister has three kinds of guidelines that may be used to help

shape his or her theological responsibility over the course of a career. The first of these is some reasonable attention to theological responsibility in general as that has been described: attentiveness to the faith and heritage, wrestling with proper translation of it, and constant inquiry into its meaning and implications. There is an inescapable obligation to keep up a little bit across the whole range of theological studies. To this end there are journals, continuing education programs, sound older books that one owns but never mastered, as well as the chance to select discriminatingly from new literature.

The second guideline, I am firmly convinced, is for the minister to give particular attention to that area of theology or of ministry that has most helped him or her to "come alive" as a minister. These areas may be very different for different people. They may be as varied as the letters of Paul, the dynamics of groups, clinical pastoral education, the patterns of worship, involvement in the inner city, or the life of Martin Luther. The point is that, for some people, the excitement engendered by some one of these areas has been indigenous, and has sharpened one's sensitivity to everything else going on in ministry. It is not the same thing as an academic field of specialization. One may never become an expert in it, technically speaking. But if the interest in it is inherent and strong, it is probably worthwhile to continue cultivating it so long as it continues to shed light on much beyond itself. Some interests of this enlivening kind appear to be lifelong, while others are useful for a time and then are supplanted by others that perform the same illuminating function.

The third guideline lies in disciplined

theological reflection on the daily experiences of actual ministry, as discussed earlier in the introduction in connection with the Doctor of Ministry program. One might put it this way. Every act of ministry, if it has been worth doing at all, and regardless of its apparent success or failure, deserves a little bit of reflection to the end of improvement next time. But if such reflection is non-theological, then the minister is as slowly but surely building a wall between ministry and theology as if he or she frankly renounced all theological interest.

I have already suggested, however, that the impediments to making this kind of procedure habitual are formidable. It is not simply that a competent theological analysis of a ministry situation may show up deficiencies in what one has done or tried to do. The resistance seems deeper than such specific critiques. It seems determined to protect, at almost any cost, the notion that theology is a help and not a judgment. Earlier, I called this a "magic helper" conception of theology. From a psychological point of view, it demonstrates the process of defensive idealization, according to which it may be much more difficult to admit the possible error in one's view of the ideal self than to confess the flaws in the actual self. The early researches of Carl Rogers were instructive on this point. Successful counseling changed the view of the actual self. But it seldom touched the picture of the ideal self. The impregnable bastion was the imaginative view of what one might be. It is of course precisely this imaginative projection that a well-rounded theology calls into question.

When the ministers in our D.Min. program do learn to use a wide range

of theological resources in analyzing their ministry situations, I believe they are learning to give up, however slowly and reluctantly, some kind of idealized view of theology. They see that theology is not a magic helper automatically supporting their intention in particular acts of ministry. They experience a critique of that very intention; but at the same time they receive a judgment on the past situation, they acquire an insight into the next situation. Theology is dethroned from its idealized state, and proves, all things considered, to be more helpful than otherwise. To arrive at that end, however, the notion that theology is to be attended to only when it is obviously helpful has had to be renounced. Hearing the word, as Karl Barth correctly stated, is at first always upsetting. Learning to listen for the word is, as he was more reluctant to state, a source of deeper satisfaction than anyone knows who has never genuinely heard the word.

III

What can and should a seminary do to help its students and graduates to develop appropriate theological responsibility? Some of these things have been alluded to in the previous discussion, and need only to be mentioned. First, courses that deal with some dimension of ministry, such as preaching or pastoral care, can make explicit efforts to aid students to relate theological resources responsibly to the specific tasks. Second, it is my conviction that such learning is always greater when the actual experience of the student or minister is the focus of discussion. Third, there seems no good reason why a student's work in any branch of theology cannot, to some extent, be explicitly related to actual or potential ministry

situations, or at least the background laid for the student to do so.

If these and other specific measures are to be effective, however, it seems necessary for students and ministers to be convinced that the faculty collectively is concerned to relate theology and ministry. The relatively good record that we have had in the D.Min. workshops to this end suggests that, at least for the two workshop leaders, one from a classical and the other from a practical discipline, that really works. Virtually without exception, faculty members who have led such workshops have in fact been committed to relating theology and ministry, regarding neither as foreign to their task. That fact has had a paramount influence on the ministers in the workshops. Ordinarily they do not emerge from the program as research experts in any branch of theology or ministry. But they acquire wisdom in exploring those theological resources that can best guide them in a variety of ministry situations.

I do not believe that we can precisely duplicate the D.Min. experience with students in the initial phase of theological education. The ministers are on the job full time, have fully accepted their ministerial role, and have encountered troubling problems on which they are seeking light. That may or may not be true of M.Div. and A.M. students, but it is nothing against them that it is often untrue. Therefore, it is clear that a precise duplication of the D.Min. program would be unrealistic.

From the beginning of the D.Min. program, however, we have sought to explore what aspects of that agenda might have transfer value to our primary degree work. Already many courses are profiting in some respects from the inquiries. If the faculty were

large enough to enable us to have more jointly taught courses, crossing the lines of fields and departments, we could do still more.

There is, nevertheless, a factor of resistance in the faculty. This has arisen as the unintended consequence of improving theological knowledge and understanding by cultivating specialization in scholarship. Such specialization, whether in the New Testament, ethics, or Christian education, makes possible for faculty members a depth of exploration not otherwise possible. Unhappily, its unintended and undesirable corollary is often to give not only to individual faculty members but also to a faculty collectively the notion that they have been granted certificates of exemption from any responsibility except in relation to their field of specialization. It is a good thing to have freedom to explore an area in depth. But if much of the faculty's task is preparing people for ministry, it is not a good thing if the certificates of exemption are displayed as prominently as the areas of special competence. The minister, present or future, knows that he or she will have to try to put it all together. People who appear to have a license freeing them from any such responsibility can hardly be called the best role models.

It is to just this kind of situation that one of our experiments of the past two years has spoken very loudly and clearly. Since the autumn of 1976, three groups of faculty members, averaging ten or so at a time, have engaged in serious seminar study patterned on the D.Min. workshop model. Actual ministry situations in which faculty members have been engaged have been put into written form, and analyzed, with

logical issues or resources to improve understanding of the situations of ministry. Every participating faculty member has exposed himself or herself in terms of an act of ministry, not just the field of specialization. Colleagues have dealt critically, but also supportively, with each situation. I have encountered no faculty member participating in one of these seminars who does not feel significantly improved by the experience. Not quite half the faculty have so far been involved in these seminars. It is my hope that the remainder of the faculty will either enroll for the seminar scheduled for 1979, or request one for a future date. The seminars are not a panacea. But in my seventeen years on this campus, they have done more to eliminate the certificates of exemption than anything else I have seen.

When each of these faculty seminars has concluded, its members have been impressed with the unfinished business of how the new insights may, at least in a few particular ways, be carried over into regular work beyond the D.Min. program itself. There have been continuing meetings and discussions to that end. Every possible experimental advance has of course to confront the weight of heavily scheduled routine.

In however small a way, the faculty seminars have made one declaration in principle that is of paramount importance. The participating members have said in effect: we will not ask ministers to do something that we have not made an effort to do ourselves. Token as it may have been, that involvement on the part of faculty members has included not only exposure of themselves in ministry situations but also exploration of theological resources relevant to those situations, no matter if the resources lie within the field of specialization or not.

All certificates of exemption have been cancelled.

Is it possible for a theological seminary to induce its whole faculty to cancel their exemption certificates so that the issues and resources in theology itself, and in its relation to ministry, may be seriously and periodically discussed as a part of the ongoing life of the faculty as basic as developing curriculums or making policy decisions? I do not know the answer to this question. But I believe the recent seminars by the three faculty groups provide a potential climate for such discussion that was only nascent before.

Theology, whether we like it or not, is a complex business. Without faith and commitment, it would never get started. But without both scholarship and self-questioning, it would be without the cutting edge of inquiry. It is

both initiated and concluded by involvement, but in between it must become at home with detachment, although never so comfortable as to eschew involvement altogether.

It is my testimony, perhaps not scientifically verifiable but nonetheless full of conviction, that God's grace has been operative in this seminary precisely in some of the activities I have described in this discussion. I am far from certain, in detailed terms of program, how we may respond to that action in the ways that will advance theological responsibility most effectively for ministers, for other students, and for ourselves. Something, however small and token it may be, has happened here that is not of our own conscious devising. If we recognize that, it is possible that we may not fail to hear the call.

The Door That Closes

Sermon by PAUL W. MEYER

Born in India of missionary parents, the Rev. Paul W. Meyer is the Helen H. P. Manson Professor of New Testament Literature and Exegesis at Princeton Theological Seminary. An alumnus of Elmhurst College and Union Theological Seminary, N.Y. (B.D. and Th.D.), with studies also in Basel and Göttingen, Dr. Meyer has taught at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Vanderbilt Theological Seminary, and came to Princeton in the autumn of 1978. He is the author of The Justification of Jesus (1977 Shaffer Lectures at Yale). This sermon was given in Miller Chapel on November 29, 1978.

Text: Luke 13:22-30 (RSV)

SOME years ago the Columbia Broadcasting System devoted one of its special broadcasts to an "Essay on Doors." In what was at once a light-hearted whimsy and a kind of reflective visual and audio prose poem, the commentator, followed by the moving television camera, sauntered from one kind of door to another, opening, closing, demonstrating and talking about: the warmly-lit and inviting front door of a home; a much more heavily used kitchen screen-door, with its long spring and the unforgettable sound of its slamming shut; a revolving door, simultaneously inhaling and exhaling customers of some busy emporium; a mysterious closet-door; a conversational Dutch door; a tricky pair of louvered swinging doors—and many more.

One could conduct a comparable tour of Biblical doors, and find a similar variety of denotation and connotation. A few, just within the New Testament, are: the temple doors, in one place shading a crippled beggar who arrested the passing apostles, and in another slammed shut to keep out Paul and the supposed defilement of his non-Jewish companions on the sacred precincts; the visionary door through which the

seer of Revelation is admitted to the throne of heaven and its surrounding worship; the figurative door of missionary opportunity opened for Paul in Ephesus; the door of death and decay, shut and opened by the rolling of a great stone; the prison doors, from which here an earthquake and there an angel set apostles free; the gates of Hades, signaling the domain of an alien and hostile power; the door to the sheepfold, serving to test whether the one who enters is a real shepherd or an impostor; Jesus himself, *the* door to salvation; or the door of the hearer's indifferent heart, upon which the words of Jesus are a knock, a persevering, a persisting, a pressing knock.

One of these words of Jesus, which supplies our text, has itself to do with a door. Not two doors, mark you, one leading to life and the other to death, but one door, which is eventually a *closed* door. The only question about that kind of door is which side of it a person is on, for a closed door has only two sides: an inside and an outside.

There is nothing particularly unclear about the parable. Jesus is asked to respond to a standard religious question of his day: whether in the end only a

few will turn out to be saved. His reply is to speak of salvation as a door which God opens and human beings must enter, a door that opens only from the inside. And it is a *narrow* door: it takes some struggle and effort to get in; one cannot simply stroll leisurely through it! If some do not enter, that is not because God is unwilling to admit them, but because they fail to meet the terms which the door itself imposes, and the running themes of Jesus' teaching in the Synoptic tradition make clear what that involves: salvation cannot be taken for granted; it is not enough to say "We have Abraham as our father"; the very presence of God's open door poses the demand for a response to Him, for obedience and the pursuit of his righteousness!

Even more important: this door is not rusted open permanently. A time comes when the door is shut, when it is too late for even the most strenuous effort to gain access. The last verses vividly contrast what goes on inside and outside this *closed* door. Inside is light and joy; here the patriarchs and prophets, and people from every quarter of the world sit down at the Messianic Banquet in the Kingdom of God. Outside there is darkness and despair. "Weeping and gnashing of teeth" in this context is hardly an expression of remorse and fear—but the grinding fury of frustration on the part of those who thought they had some right to get in. This fury is their punishment, for the Kingdom of God always turns things inside out. "I tell you, I do not know where you come from." The reality of God and his repudiation is far more shattering than any silence of God ever could be; it always upsets the calculations of those who believe they have some prescriptive right to God's favor. "Yes,

and some who are now last will be first, and some who are first will be last."

Of course it has always been possible for some Christian folk to remain untouched by the sight of this closed door, to make out that *they* are the ones inside and that those who stand outside are someone else: the Jews of Jesus' own day, or the Roman Catholics of the time of the Reformation, or someone else today. Luke shows a profounder dimension to his Gospel, to his Christian faith, when he does not merely repeat the parable and let it go at that. Instead, he introduces into the frantic conversation that goes on through the closed door precisely the uniquely Christian version of this false security, the last-ditch appeal on the part of those who are outside to the historical presence of Jesus! "Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.'" "Come on, Lord! We still sit at our communion tables with you. We have more than heard, we have studied and learned the teachings you gave while you lived on this earth of ours. Doesn't that count for anything?!" "I tell you, I do not know where you come from; depart from me, all you workers of iniquity." By itself, an appeal to Jesus is in no respect different from an appeal to Abraham—and it does not matter under what theological banner the appeal is made.

This is a frightening door, this closed door, a profoundly unsettling door. One can leaf through the whole Gospel of Luke, through the whole New Testament, searching for some detour around it, some last hinged panel in this door to squeeze through, to relieve the finality of it. And there is none. Why is that? Because religious *insecurity* is as much a part of the authentic knowledge

of God as religious certainty; "not having" is as crucial as "having"; the outside of the door is as important as the inside. If we dispense with the one, the other is gone as well, no matter how much we protest to the contrary. And why should that be so? Because in the New Testament all these things we prize: salvation, security, possession, joy, freedom, love, peace, realization—all are given in the form of *insecurity*, always proffered in a way that keeps them on God's terms and not on ours, always in a form which probes and challenges and unsettles. The love of God in Christ, from which of course neither death nor life, nor height nor depth can separate us, is either the burning love of Paul's righteous God who meets us on his own terms rather than on ours—on a cross—or else it is a pious illusion. "On God's own terms"—that is the meaning, in the New Testament, of God's transcendence, and it is utterly pointless to talk of Jesus of Nazareth without it. God's transcendence has very little to do with how much supernaturalism one may or may not be able to display in one's theology; no, it has to do rather with the difference between God's ways and ours. The gospel is always given in the form of our insecurity before God, always with a door slamming on our expectations and claims, for it is only God's terms that make it authentic and sure.

That is, finally, the real reason why

authentic religious possession terminates in the prayer and worship for which we are assembled here. Not because in this chapel some inner life must be juxtaposed to the outer life of our studies (if your studies engage you only outwardly, how tiresome and dull they must be!). Why prayer? Because authentic religious security is found only in the God whom we cannot control, before whom we must remain ourselves insecure, ourselves always the petitioners. Real prayer is always prayer to the God of a door that *closes* and has an outside as well as an inside. And why worship? Because worship is fundamentally nothing else than this: once again to recognize and to acknowledge God's terms in place of our own. That is all—and yet that is everything! "Yes, and some who are now last will be first, and some who are first will be last."

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, who hast sent thy Son into the world to open the door to the knowledge and love of thee, help us to enter that door. Renew us, we beseech thee, by thy life-giving Spirit, by the presence with us and to us of thine own power to give life—so that we may as true worshippers worship thee in truth, as thou truly art—and so that we may pray to thee as we ought to pray, who knowest and searchest the hearts of humankind. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Praise for All Things

Sermon by RICHARD A. BAER, JR.

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Text: Ephesians 5:18-20

PREACHING has a close relationship to theology, and theology is a rather strange discipline, a discipline which is not quite sure whether it ought to feel at home in the modern university or not. In fact, the role of the theologian may be not too dissimilar to that of the court jester in the medieval world and later. The theologian appears to speak foolishness at times, and one never quite knows whether what he says is going to be very useful or not. Yet, to our surprise, what at first appears to be quite useless sometimes turns out to be the most useful of all.

Jesus had a fine sense for the dialectic of the useful and the useless, for that mysterious interweaving of the relevant and the irrelevant. Consider how he perplexed his followers by telling them that the one who tries to save his life will lose it, whereas the one who loses his life for Jesus' sake will find it. Jesus was a master of the "eschatological surprise," the idea that in the end time things may not turn out the way we expected. In fact, he was bold enough to suggest that the tax collectors (who were collaborators with Rome), the sinners, and the prostitutes, might just make it into the Kingdom of God before the righteous. That was an eschatological surprise that was not too popular in his day, and, of course, he paid the consequences.

The theologian, in his apparent foolishness, may risk saying things that in the long run, by God's grace, may even reflect a certain wisdom. I am reminded of that fascinating passage from the book of Proverbs where we read that the personified Wisdom of God was playing and dancing before God when God created the world:

When he established the heavens, I was there. . . . When he marked out the foundations of the earth, then I was beside him, like a little child; And I was daily his delight, dancing before him always, rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the sons of men.

I have often wondered what this passage means. For such a serious business as the creation of the world, it sounds far too frivolous. Should the author really be talking about play and dancing and a little child at such a time?

As I pondered the meaning of this text, I thought of a comment of Robert Frost: "A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom." The word "poem," of course, comes from the Greek *poiein*, that is, to do or to make. But these are the exact terms of the text from Proverbs. God was making a world, creating a poem. There was delight and also wisdom. But what does it all mean?

What I think it means is that God created the world because he wanted to, not out of compulsion or necessity. As the theologians put it, he created the world out of his own good pleasure. And what he created he found good and beautiful and full of delight. That is clearly the judgment of the priestly editor in the first chapter of Genesis.

For us today this would suggest that the basis of our lives is not work and achievement and the necessity of proving or justifying ourselves but rather joy and delight. Contrary to the maxim, "If you're not good for something, you're good for nothing," the Bible is trying to tell us that just the fact that we are is good. Being is valuable in itself. Life begins with the freeing declaration, "Behold, it is very good!"

Roman Catholic novelist and literary critic Romano Guardini knew the meaning of this declaration when he wrote that worship, analyzed according to its form, is far sooner a kind of play than it is work. It is the most non-utilitarian of all human activities. "It is in the highest sense the life of a child in which everything is picture, melody, and song. It is a pouring forth of the sacred, God-given life of the soul; it is a kind of holy play in which the soul, with utter abandon learns how to waste time for the sake of God." What a marvelous definition of worship, one quite foreign to our contemporary fascination with efficiency and success. I might ask, parenthetically, how many of us even know how to waste time for each other's sake? How simply to be with another person because we delight in and enjoy each other and want to while away some time together? This, says Guardini, is what worship is. It is simply wanting to be in the presence of God.

About five years ago, a book came across my desk that had another idea in it that at first sounded equally foolish to me. In fact when I first saw the main thesis of the author, I thought it was almost indecent. He claimed that we ought somehow to be able to learn to praise God not just for the good things in life, not just for what is beautiful, what is noble, what is pleasing to us, but that we also could learn to praise God for the ugly things in life, for the pain and suffering, for the disappointments and difficulties, indeed for the evil that we see in our own existence. This was a very strange, indeed, a foolish idea to me when I first encountered it. The book, *Prison to Praise*, was written by Merlin Carothers, a former army chaplain. This, I might say, did not predispose me in favor of the book, for my pacifist background left me with more than a little bias against the military. Furthermore, Carothers had few of the academic credentials which at that point in my life were still so important. Nor was the book very well written. The style was clumsy, and at points the author appeared to contradict himself. The book simply did not meet the standards I had learned to expect from religious and theological writing.

Yet, for some reason I do not yet fully understand (call it God's providential grace, if you will), I did not stop reading Carothers' book. I read through the first six chapters, and then when I got to the seventh and eighth chapters, something strange and mysterious began to happen to me. I was no longer aware of the author's poor credentials. I forgot all about his bad grammar. I stopped being offended by his lack of theological sophistication. I

began to listen. There was a deep quiet inside of me. I began to learn.

In the book Carothers tells of an army wife who came to him as chaplain of the base and began to pour out her troubles to him. Her alcoholic husband's drinking problem had grown progressively worse over several years. The woman or her children often found him passed out on the living room floor drunk and naked—or, worse, the neighbors in their apartment building found him that way in the hall. Desperate, the woman saw no alternative but to take the children and leave him. "Whatever you say," she concluded, "don't tell me to stay with him. I just can't do it."

In that last comment—"Don't tell me to stay with him"—Chaplain Carothers somehow heard a note of indecision and a plea. He sensed that she still loved her husband a great deal. At that moment, Carothers writes, he felt led to tell her: "I don't really care whether you stay with him or not. I just want you to thank God that your husband is like he is." The woman was incredulous. How, after all, can a wife thank God that her husband has ruined the family and destroyed their marriage! Finally, however, she agreed to kneel while Chaplain Carothers prayed that God grant her faith enough to believe that "He is a God of love and power who holds the universe in His hand." And she prayed, "I do believe."

When Chaplain Carothers finally called her after two weeks and asked how things were going, she was ecstatic. Her husband hadn't had a drink since the day she had prayed in Carothers' office. "That's wonderful," said Carothers, adding that he wanted to talk to the man about the power of God that was working in their lives. Puz-

zled, the woman said, "Didn't you tell him already?" She was sure that the change in her husband was because the Chaplain had talked to him, prayed with him, and helped him to overcome his drinking problem. "No," replied Carothers, "I haven't met him yet." It was a miracle, said the woman. Yes, replied Carothers, it was the power of praise releasing God's power to work in the man's life.

Perhaps one could offer a reasonably good psychological explanation of what happened in this case. On that particular evening, her husband might have sensed, quite unconsciously even, that something was different. Perhaps for the first time in years, he felt his wife really accepted him as he was. This might have broken (therapists sometimes use the term "decathect") his need to drink—perhaps the need to be the "naughty little boy," or to test his wife's love because as a child he had never really been sure of his parents' love. Something had changed, and he was healed.

An example from my own experience, which also is at least partially intelligible in psychological terms, happened two years ago in a small prayer-encounter group I was involved in. During the second meeting of the group a woman in her mid-thirties broke down crying. "All my life," she said, "I have wanted to have children of my own, and now I know that will never be possible." She had adopted four children, yet she found herself quite unable to accept her situation. She was filled with bitterness, resentment, disappointment.

After a few moments of silence, I felt led to ask her: "Have you tried thanking God for the fact that you are not able to have children of your own?"

But, like Carothers' army wife, she was horrified at the suggestion. Still, something must have reached her, for she was strangely silent the rest of the hour. I decided to let the matter rest.

About half way through our meeting the next day, with almost no introduction, the woman simply said, "I want to try praising God in the way you suggested." "Thank you, God," she prayed, "that I will never be able to have any children of my own." The healing we then witnessed was far more dramatic and sudden than we could have anticipated. As if a stopper had been pulled out of a bottle, fifteen years of resentment, bitterness, and disappointment came flooding out of the woman. She is a different person today than when I first met her.

It is important to note that Chaplain Carothers qualifies in several ways what he says about praising God for pain and suffering. First of all, he points out that we in no way need to deny the reality of suffering and evil. He does not believe that these are just in our imagination, and I agree with him. Such a position would be dangerous both psychologically and theologically. Secondly, Carothers says, praising God for all things does not make it necessary to believe that God willed or sent the evil to us. One must clearly distinguish between the permissive and the directive will of God. He may *permit* certain suffering and difficulties in our lives but not necessarily *send* or *will* them. Thirdly, in no way need we pretend to *like* what has happened to us in situations of suffering, loss, and pain. To do so could well be a kind of psychological suicide. Finally, praising God for all things is not just a pious gimmick. God cannot be manipulated through praise to change his mind and

heal us. He is not at our beck and call to perform religious tricks for us. The sooner we realize that he is no celestial bellhop the quicker we will grow towards spiritual maturity.

In the four years since first reading Carothers' book, I have tried to apply his teachings in my own life. The results have surprised me. There have been areas in my life where there was bitterness, where there was hostility and resentment. There were areas where I had not been able to accept myself, no matter how hard I had tried, nor could I accept others fully. But when I stopped trying to do these things and simply started thanking God for myself just as I was and for others just as they were, some very beautiful things began to happen.

These experiences led me to begin to explore the subject of praising God for all things in a more systematic and scholarly fashion. Could I find such an emphasis, for instance, in the Bible or in the theological literature and devotional writings of the church?

I must admit that the direct Biblical evidence that can be cited in support of the notion of praising God for all things is scanty. Paul writes in Ephesians 5:18-20, "Be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father." I Thessalonians 5:18 can be translated as in the R.S.V., "Give thanks in all circumstances," but the K.J.V. is probably a better rendering of the original Greek with its, "In everything give thanks." Paul thanks God for his weakness, including his puzzling "thorn in the flesh" (II Cor. 12:1-10), for he believes that even his weakness will work to the greater glory of God.

Finally, we might note Romans 8:28, which, at least, might help establish a theological framework for the theme of praise for all things. I think it is best translated: "We know that God works everything for good with those who love him, with those who are called according to his purpose."

The theme is more clearly present in Christian devotional and theological writings. In his second book, *Power in Praise*, Carothers cites a number of examples. Eighteenth century English clergyman William Law, for instance, said: "If anyone could tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and perfection, he must tell you to make it a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing." Helen Keller writes, "I thank God for my handicaps, for through them I have found myself, my work and my God." John Wesley in his *Notes on the New Testament* writes: "Thanksgiving is inseparable from true prayer: it is almost essentially connected with it. He that always prays is ever giving praise, whether in ease or pain, both for prosperity and for the greatest adversity. He blesses God for all things, looks on them as coming from him, and receives them only for his sake; not choosing nor refusing, liking nor disliking anything, but only as it is agreeable or disagreeable to his perfect will."

The theme of praise for all things runs through poetry, philosophy, and literature, as well. The heroine in Leon Bloy's late nineteenth century novel *The Woman Who Was Poor*, utters these amazing words, "Everything that happens, is something to be adored." Her words were not the shallow utter-

ance of someone who had led an easy and sheltered life, for she had suffered greatly and known the loss of almost everyone and everything near and dear to her. Out of context, her words would have sounded obscene to me, but I reserved judgment.

Then came another surprise: Nietzsche, of all people, in his *Will to Power*, wrote: "If it be granted that we say Yea to a single moment, then in so doing we have said Yea not only to ourselves, but to all existence." In his *Posthumous Notes*, he speaks even more directly: "To have joy in anything, one must approve everything."

I also discovered some beautiful passages in the poetry of Rainer Maria Rilke, as in these haunting lines from the tenth of his *Duino Elegies*:

Someday, emerging at last from this terrifying vision, may I burst into jubilant praise to assenting Angels! May not even one of the clear-struck keys of the heart fail to respond through alighting on slack or doubtful or rending strings! May a new-found splendour appear in my streaming face! May inconspicuous Weeping flower! How dear you will be to me then, you Nights of Affliction! Oh, why did I not, inconsolable sisters, more bendingly kneel to receive you, more loosely surrender myself to your loosened hair? We wasters of sorrows! How we stare away into sad endurance beyond them, trying to foresee their end! Whereas they are nothing else than our winter foliage, our sombre evergreen, *one* of the seasons of our interior year,—not only season—they're also place, settlement, camp, soil, dwelling.

So there I was, a theologian by training, caught up in a theme that made

little sense to me analytically but a great deal of sense existentially, personally. Moreover, I now had found that it was not an uncommon idea in religious and secular literature. So I began to ask myself: What does it really mean? What are the objections to integrating these ideas into my total experience?

It might be objected that praising God for all things in effect is a refusal to live with the New Testament tension between the cross and resurrection. Would not such a position cheapen grace, docetize the God-forsakenness of the cross, de-eschatologize hope? Does it not trivialize human suffering by too quickly letting it be swallowed up in a theology of glory? Am I not advocating a religion of sight rather than faith, confidence without struggle, conviction without paradox? Do I not forget that the book of Job is also a part of the Scriptures and that Christian mystics refer to the dark night of the soul as well as to praise and thanksgiving? These are all fair objections and cannot be avoided.

Actually, I see much danger in praising God for all things if one does not also deal realistically with the anger and resentment one experiences. On a psychological level, there is an inner process one may have to go through by which an initial rejection of some event or an initial failure to see its point is worked through to a final acceptance and affirmation. If the cross—in one sense a tragedy and an ugly thing—is the very “font of every blessing,” then the most unpromising aspects of a person’s past can likewise be channels of blessings. But the individual may need to wrestle with the event after the fashion of Job or of Jesus in Gethsemane. Or if a person is not yet ready to cope with the conditions under which a

given part of his life will bless him, he may have to leave it and go into exile, like Jacob. There he may prosper and grow to the point where he is ready to return. Even then, he may have to wrestle with this part of the past, and, in effect, say with Jacob, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me (Gen. 32:26).” Blessing could be seen as the total energy at all levels which comes to one as he accepts larger and larger wholes of self, world, and God into himself.

Praise, as I have presented it, would appear to short-cut this psychological process of wrestling through a problem, and perhaps in a certain sense it does. It could be viewed as an act of sheer faith, an “as if” procedure which makes it possible to apprehend what is not present tangibly. The danger would be that it could lead one into a fantasy world, violating the dynamics by which actual transformation occurs. On the other hand, there is much evidence that in the realm of spiritual growth and healing, ordinary time determinants may not be quite relevant. Lasting change may come without the “ordinary” wrestling and working through of the particular difficulty. A more honest approach might even dare admit that what actually happens even in the more usual psychological “working through” of a problem remains largely a mystery even to the trained therapist. In successful therapy moments of critical change often possess a quality of timelessness about them, not unlike what Mircea Eliade and others mean when they refer to “eternal time.” There may be long days of preparation, but the actual “new birth,” the emergence of a new Gestalt, may come suddenly, dramatically.

Working through difficult experi-

ences from one's past life may also involve what some writers refer to as "the New Testament teaching on unilateral forgiveness," namely that God calls the Christian to forgive those who harm him even if they neither ask for nor deserve forgiveness (the essential transaction in such a case is between the wronged individual and God). Or it may demand dealing with anger (especially intense, disproportionate anger) in the presence of God before expressing it (if at all) to the person who has committed the offense. The important thing is that anger be dealt with and not repressed, yet dealt with in such a way as not to create further alienation with the offending party.

Finally, praising God for all things—as I have already noted—does not grant one immunity from suffering and pain. Rather it is a placing of the outcome of one's life in God's hands, a refusal to demand that God justify himself to man, a willingness to live through the suffering and pain without accusing God. One can feel God-forsaken and still praise God!

Yet another objection might be raised against a theology of praise. An individual may well find the faith to praise God for everything, the good and evil, in his life, but does not this somehow imply a signal lack of seriousness in dealing with evil? Is not this teaching on praising God for all things at odds with the pervasive Biblical emphasis on justice? Will it not cause us to lose interest in our commitment to improve society, to eliminate suffering and injustice? Perhaps this kind of teaching is more compatible with Taoism or Zen Buddhism than with Judaism and Christianity. The statements "Everything that happens is something to be adored," or "To have joy in anything, one must

approve everything" are, from one perspective, utterly scandalous. They cut right across the whole biblical emphasis on justice and on taking seriously the needs of the poor, the homeless, the orphan and widow.

From another perspective, however, I have come to believe that they express a profound understanding of life, one which Taoists and Zen Buddhists appreciate more easily than Christians and Jews. There is a dimension of human existence where God calls us to stop judging, to go beyond simple assessments of good and evil, beyond our need to label, to criticize, to compare. To be sure, evil still exists, although it is not real in the same sense that God is real, but somehow we must learn that in the mystery of God's righteousness, even darkness and suffering have their place in the total drama of the world coming to birth. In learning the lesson of praise for all things, I believe we will become less self-righteous, less attracted to that kind of absolutist piety that is willing to crush others in the process of saving the world. Our crusading mentality will be tempered by the realization that ultimately the battle is not ours, but God's. We will be more willing to let our agenda be set by God's caring for the world, rather than by the evil and threatening circumstances that we see all about us. Our eyes will be on Him and His saving presence in the world—on the cross, the resurrection, and the second coming of Christ, rather than on the empires of this world, which are, in principle, already defeated, and even in their power and arrogance, already perishing.

The answer to the world's suffering is not for us consciously to take this suffering into ourselves. There may be more than a little hubris in our think-

ing that we could do this in any case. The Bible has a lot to say about vicarious suffering, and there are times when God indeed calls us to suffer for others. But this is not a self-appointed suffering. It is not something which we in our own self-righteousness *choose* to do for someone else. It is not something we look for. We share in the sufferings of Christ. We do not seek them out ourselves.

The kind of praise, I am talking about, then, is no Pollyanna optimism. It is no stoic denial of the suffering of the world. It need not pretend that Dachau and Auschwitz or the napalming of Vietnamese children never happened. In fact, most of the people I know who have broken through to genuine and lasting praise in their lives are people who have suffered deeply, people who have known evil, encountered it directly and brutally, and yet somehow have gone beyond the impact of that evil to quiet acceptance. The reason Christians and the Jews can speak so freely about praise without becoming callous and indifferent to the sufferings of the world, is that they know through their own traditions, through the image of the suffering servant in Judaism and through the reality of the crucifixion in Christianity, what suffering means.

Thus we do not have to become indifferent to the cries of little children and to the pangs of nature brutalized because of man's greed and indifference. We need not ignore the cries of third world mothers who watch their children's bodies and minds twisted by hunger and malnutrition, for biblical religion well knows the meaning of suffering. Christianity is rooted in the cross, as well as in the resurrection.

I have come to believe that God is

precisely the one who always remembers the good and transforms the evil in our lives. Whenever there is beauty, truth, nobility, strength, courage, hope, love, kindness, freedom, God remembers these and somehow writes them into the very fabric of the universe. But the evil he "forgets." The metaphor is clumsy, but we might say that God is "the great cosmic garbage disposal," or, if you want an ecologically better metaphor, "the great compost pile of the universe."

Now, what do I mean? What I think the New Testament writers are trying to say through the doctrine of the cross, is that God in Christ always takes the suffering, the pain, the sin, the loneliness, and the hurt of human existence back into himself and through what one writer has called "the alchemy of grace," transforms these—if we will let him—into the possibility of new life, into the seedbed of the future. The suffering and the pain and the disappointment become the fertilizer, the manure for the future. Out of the debris and ashes of human sin and suffering, God makes it possible for life to blossom again. He is the great cosmic garbage disposal, the great compost pile of the universe, and if we will give him back our sin and our suffering—indeed if we can even learn to praise Him for permitting these things in our lives—I believe we will see miracles happen.

But can we really believe in a God who uses broken bodies and broken minds, the cries of innocent children, lamenting mothers, and bereaved fathers simply as the seedbed of the future? No, I think not, and that is not really what I am suggesting. At least I could not believe in that kind of God. What I am trying to say is this: God is able to use the very things that seem

counter to His purpose, the very things which He hates with a perfect hatred—he is able to use even *these* things to bring about goodness and beauty. If we will give our suffering and pain back to God in praise, he is somehow able to use them to bring about new life.

It is at this point that we finally come face to face with the Biblical affirmation of resurrection and the life to come. I believe Kant was right—some kind of immortality is a necessity for the moral life. For myself, if I did not believe that the napalmed children, the mongoloid babies, the six million Jews of the holocaust will yet somehow know life in all its fullness, I would find it very hard to praise God.

And so we dare to praise. We even dare to praise God for the pain and suffering of the world. Will it work? In my own life it has made a great difference. But in one sense I do not care whether it works or not, for I believe we are first of all called to faithfulness rather than to effectiveness. And perhaps in the long run, in the mercy of God, the life of faithfulness and the foolishness of commitment to a crucified messiah will turn out to be the only true wisdom. That is the risk of faith. That is the hope of the resurrection.

Thomas Merton, in *New Seeds of Contemplation*, writes this:

What is serious to men is often trivial in the sight of God. What in God might appear to us as "play" is perhaps what he himself takes most seriously. At any rate the Lord plays and diverts Himself in the garden of his creation, and if we could let go of our own obsession with what we think is the meaning of it all, we

might be able to hear His call and follow Him in His mysterious, cosmic dance. We do not have to go very far to catch echoes of that game, and of that dancing. When we are alone on a starlit night; when by chance we see the migrating birds in autumn descending on a grove of junipers to rest and eat; when we see children in a moment when they are really children; when we know love in our own hearts; or when, like the Japanese poet Bashō we hear an old frog land in a quiet pond with a solitary splash—at such times the awakening, the turning inside out of all values, the "newness," the emptiness and purity of vision that make themselves evident, provide a glimpse of the cosmic dance.

For the world and time are the dance of the Lord in emptiness. The silence of the spheres is the music of a wedding feast. The more we persist in misunderstanding the phenomena of life, the more we analyze them out into strange finalities and complex purposes of our own, the more we involve ourselves in sadness, absurdity, and despair. But it does not matter much, because no despair of ours can alter the reality of things, or stain the joy of the cosmic dance which is always there. Indeed, we are in the midst of it, and it is in the midst of us, for it beats in our very blood, whether we want it to or not.

Yet the fact remains that we are invited to forget ourselves on purpose, cast our awful solemnity to the winds and join in the general dance.

And Rainer Maria Rilke writes:

Tell us, poet, what is it you do?—
I praise.

But the deadly and the monstrous
things, how can you bear them?
I praise.

But even what is nameless, what is
anonymous, how can you call upon
it?—
I praise.

What right have you to be true in
every disguise, beneath every mask?
I praise.

And how is it that both calm and
violent things, like star and storm,
know you for their own?—
because I praise.

That Board Meeting at Corinth

Sermon on Christian Stewardship
of Money

by CARL W. HENSLEY

IT was my good fortune recently to discover an original first-century letter written by a member of the First Christian Church at Corinth to the Apostle Paul. Its contents indicate that it was a reply to Paul's second letter to the Corinthian Church and that its basic concern was with Paul's directions regarding the collection of money for destitute Christians in Jerusalem. It seems that Paul's request for the Corinthians to give more money came at the time they were planning their annual financial campaign. This caused quite a lot of discussion and controversy in the Finance Committee meetings, and the discussion reached a fever pitch in one particular Board Meeting. The letter I found was written by Claudius, Chairman of the Finance Committee, and gave Paul the details of the discussion in what was euphemistically referred to as "That Board Meeting." I would like to share the letter with you.

First Christian Church
1022 First Avenue South
Corinth, Greece
A.D. 55

Dear Paul,

It is with mixed feelings that I write this letter. I've always considered you a good friend and have valued your advice. However, I must tell you that your recent letter created a caustic controversy in our church, especially in one of our board meetings. As Chairman of

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the Finance Committee, I am writing to give you a report, and as a friend I am writing for guidance for our coming Financial Campaign.

After your letter was read in that Board Meeting, some cried, "Money, money—that's all these ministers talk about. Why don't they stick to spiritual matters?" Others objected to your constant reminders that we had made a pledge to help the Jerusalem Christians and had not yet completed collecting the pledge. Not all were negative comments. Some felt that you were more interested in our motivation than our money and that you were trying to tell us that a proper concept and practice of giving would deepen our Christian lives. Well, one thing led to another, and that Board Meeting finally focused on a debate on motives for giving our money. That focus pleased me (in spite of occasional temper flare-ups) because I feel that proper motivation is absolutely essential to success in a church financial campaign and particularly important for the development of individual Christian lives.

The first man to speak, as usual, was Crispus. He insisted that we stress that Christians should give because God commands that we give. That old rascal always thinks in terms of doing only what he has to do. Of course, you gave him some support in Second Corinthians 9:13, when you wrote that our obedience would glorify God. His son,

a chip off the old block, added fuel to his fire by pointing out that there are over 1,000 references to material possessions in the Bible and that sixteen of Jesus' thirty-eight parables are clearly concerned with the proper management of one's possessions. He quickly pointed out that Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount that only those who do the will of God will enter the kingdom of heaven (Mt. 7:21), and for good measure quoted Jesus' statement, "Every-one to whom much is given, of him will much be required" (Luke 12:48).

Now, Paul, don't get me wrong. I realize as well as the next man that allegiance to Christ means that we must obey God's commands and that giving our money is one of his demands. But I wonder if this is really an adequate motive. If we aren't careful, this motive can become a negative force. Since God demands that I give, I may come to regard my giving as little more than paying my membership dues like those required by the Rotary and Lions Clubs. Or, I may end up paying God much like I pay the Roman I.R.S.—out of duty but with reluctance. It can be like the time my Dad gave me my first allowance. Every week he gave it to me, but he also required me to put part of it in a bank. So, I saved regularly because it was commanded, but I didn't enjoy it much. So, Paul, I guess old Crispus is right about command as a motive, but only in part. Certainly it isn't the most adequate motive.

Well, you know how some of our people get along here. You once wrote to scold us about our quarrelsome attitudes. No sooner had Crispus set forth his notion of the proper motive for giving than guess who tried to shout him down. Eutychus was frothing at the mouth at what he called "the crazy

concoction of Crispus." That really heated up that old Board Meeting. Eutychus stood up and proudly proclaimed that if Crispus and his shallow-headed son had any scriptural sense, they would know that the proper motive for giving is to give because God will bless the giver. He was quick to quote you, Paul, for after all you did write that "he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6). One of the farmers at the meeting pointed out that this is a sound law of nature. He said that he skimped on seed in sowing his fields one year and had a sparse harvest, but that the harvest was always more abundant when he sowed generously. His neighbor pointed out that his spring became stopped-up once so that it barely gave forth its supply of sweet water, and before long it stagnated. Then, when he cleaned it out so that the spring could give generously, it became sweet and free-flowing again.

Although Crispus and some of his supporters were fuming at Eutychus, no one present could deny that the Bible clearly demonstrates that God does bless those who give. When the prophet Elijah fled from Israel because of famine and found refuge with a widow in Sidon, God blessed both of them. I remember that the woman had only enough grain and oil left to prepare one more meager meal for her son and herself and then succumb to starvation. But when she obeyed God and made a meal for God's prophet first, God blessed her and caused her oil and grain to last and last until the drought ended (1 Kings 17:8-16). No wonder Jesus promised, "Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over,

will be put into your lap" (Lk. 6:38). I guess that is why you told us in your letter that "you will be enriched in every way for great generosity" (2 Cor. 9:11).

As I sat in that Board Meeting listening, I had to agree that giving our money because God will bless us is a powerful motive. On the other hand, I have some reservations here as with the first motive. This can become a subtle, self-seeking motive. If we give only in order to get, we soon will think of God's blessings as wages for our faithfulness. It reminds me of a sign that I saw in a motel room, "Don't smoke in bed. The ashes you spill may be your own." Or of the poster promoting the local cancer contribution campaign whose slogan reads, "Give to conquer cancer because you may be the next victim." This motive has led more than one church member to regard God as the great vending machine of the universe. Put in your quarter, push the button, and receive full return. I decided that Eutychus was about as right as Crispus. Both command and receiving blessings are motives for giving, but by themselves they seem to lack something.

By now, everybody in that Board Meeting was trying to talk at the same time. Songster, the Chairman, was having "a devil of a time" (oops! pardon the expression) getting the board members to follow Aristotle's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure. He finally was able to gavel the meeting to some semblance of order and recognized Demetrius next. Now, if ever there were a practical man, it has to be Demetrius. So, as you might guess, he opened his remarks to the Board with, "Now, men, let's be practical about this thing. If you just stop to think about it, you

will realize that the best motive for giving money is to support the church budget." A few groans rose around the room, and someone muttered, "Not again! He's played that same tune for years."

Most of the murmuring was quieted when our Associate Minister, Quartus, pointed out that we are now a downtown church. Not many of our members live in the neighborhood, and those who do live nearby don't have as much money to give. Most of our members live in the suburbs, some have joined churches where they live, and several others have moved away completely. It is difficult to meet our budget when people don't give generously and regularly. "Moreover," said Quartus, "inflation is taking its toll" (as if he had to remind us). "The candle makers' strike forced up the price of candles for lighting, and olive oil for those new-fangled lamps has to be imported at excessive costs. The wood dealers keep raising prices so that heating is outrageous." Gaius interrupted Quartus at this point. "Everybody knows that our ministers' salaries have increased sharply," he asserted. "Why, when Reverend Stephanas was our minister, he didn't ask for nearly as much money as Dr. Fortunatus is getting; and when Paul *first* started our church, he supported himself by making tents. I tell you, the good old days were better." Paul, you were quite right when in your first letter to us you censured us for our quarreling and strife. I wish that Gaius and a few others would heed your admonition that the minister who plants Christ's seeds and the minister who waters are nothing, but the only one who really matters is God who gives the growth (I Cor. 3:6). Gaius often lets us know that he hasn't given an

offering since Dr. Fortunatus has been our minister. With that kind of shallow dedication, we cannot hope for anything but a budget deficit.

More members need to recognize the necessity of giving to meet the budget. As Chairman of Finance I have said it many times from our pulpit: The budget is one index of the spiritual health of our church. Programs must be maintained, and our members must do it. Non-members certainly can't be expected to give to meet our budget! However, like the other motives mentioned, this motive for giving can also become so impersonal. Giving merely to meet the budget can be about as exciting as putting quarters in a parking meter when you park your chariot on the Nicolaitan Mall downtown.

By this time that Board Meeting was dragging into the late hours of the night. People were weary, and nerves were on edge. I was ready to move that we adjourn when Dionysius asked to speak. You probably remember Dionysius well since he was one of your first converts at Athens. He moved to Corinth some time ago and immediately transferred his church membership. He is such a kind, considerate Christian gentleman. He is probably the most respected member of our church. So, those who had been arguing about various motives gave him their attention.

"Gentlemen," he said courteously, "there are some aspects of Paul's letter that we have overlooked. I was impressed that he used the Macedonian Christians as examples for us. We know, as Paul reminds us, that they are financially poor—much more economically depressed than we are. Yet, Paul says that their giving 'overflowed in a wealth of liberality' and that they

gave 'beyond their means.' Why, they even begged Paul earnestly for the favor of giving (2 Cor. 8:3-4). Why? What was their motive? Maybe Paul captured the proper motive in 9:15, 'Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift.'"

As Dionysius said this, it sent my thoughts back to John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." If God loves us to that extent, then our commitment to him ought to be a love that expresses itself in generous giving. Dionysius caught my attention again as he pointed out that you stressed in 8:5 that the Macedonians gave *themselves* to the Lord *first*. Giving oneself to God completely is the fundamental response to God's love expressed in Christ. Said Dionysius firmly but graciously, "Giving self to God first is the *heart* of Christian giving. Then, generous giving of one's money is an expression of how completely God has won the person's heart."

I remember attending a Regional Convention held at Central Christian Church in Troy where my good friend Corax ministers. I was sitting with his wife and five-year-old son, Tisias, during Sunday morning worship. Corax had given Tisias a small amount of change to carry in his toga pocket. When offering time came, he whispered to his mother that he wanted to give his money in the offering. He took an offering envelope from the pew holder, but then looked perplexed. Printed on the envelope were names of various Christian endeavors and institutions to which givers could designate their offerings. His mother tried to explain that he could give to the general fund, to the Greek Theological Seminary, to the Apostle Paul Prison Fund, etc. In

a somewhat exasperated tone, Tisias replied, "But, Mom, I just want to give my money to God." In his own simple five-year-old way, Tisias captured the essential motive for a Christian to give his money.

"First we give ourselves to God," Dionysius was saying as my attention came back from the Regional Assembly to that Board Meeting, "and then giving our money flows naturally and generously out of that commitment." That reminded me of a statement made by one of the speakers at the Regional Meeting. I believe it was that college professor who taught the combined adult classes in Sunday School. He said that "to give and keep on giving is the essential nature of love for God. Love can never be tight-fisted, appeal-oriented, or issue centered. It is impelled by the essential character of its being to share, to sacrifice, to give generously. A Christian's giving can never be an occasional performance. It must always be a normal, steady, and increasing outflow of life in God."

By this time, Paul, Dionysius was calling our attention to your statement that Jesus himself is our example. Because Jesus gave himself totally to God first, he gave up all of his heavenly riches and became humanly poor for our sakes (2 Cor. 8:9). Jesus' commitment and love for God motivated him to give up his power for impotence, his dignity for ignominy, and his prestige and privilege for persecution and crucifixion. Love for this Lord certainly would put *our* giving on a proper plain.

Well, Paul, it was Dionysius who set us straight in that Board Meeting. He gave me insights that will help me and my Committee to shape our approach to the people this year. We must help

church members to see that stewardship is not a clever scheme to raise money. Rather, they must see that it is a pathway to producing solid Christian character and that character committed to Christ is more crucial than cash. I am convinced that our church has not reached the saturation point in what we are capable of giving, but I am also convinced that we *have* reached the saturation point in what we will give in our present stage of commitment. The remedy is not command, reward, or budget appeals. The remedy is conversion to God that brings the rule of Christ to the center of our lives. When we give ourselves to Christ first, then we will give our money as never before.

Paul, I want our people to experience the joy of a love that leads them to commit 10% of their incomes to God. After all, tithing is a firm biblical guide to giving. I want them to give their lives to God so that their love for Him will motivate them to give 10% off of the top and not give Him leftovers and scraps.

Well, old friend, this has been a long, rambling letter, but I wanted you to know all about that old Board Meeting. If you still have your sense of humor after struggling through this epistle, maybe you can appreciate a comic strip that appeared in the Corinthian Star and Tribune the other day. Pogo the possum was fishing, and a duck came by. "Howdy, Pogo," he says, "is you seed my cousin? He's migratin' north by kiddie car." "A duck migratin' by kiddie car?" quizzes Pogo. "Yep. He's afeared to fly high; he gets afeared he might fall off." Pogo asks, "Why doesn't he swim?" "He gets seasick." Then Pogo makes an astute observation for a possum, "All I can

say is that when he decided to be a duck, he picked the wrong business."

Paul, I guess that if a Christian is not willing to give God his life first and then give generously at least 10% of his

income out of that love, he is like a duck migrating north in a kiddie car—he picked the wrong business.

Your Friend in Christ,
Claudius

Return from Captivity: New Steps for the Urban Church

Sermon by RODERIC P. FROHMAN

A native of Detroit, the Rev. Roderic P. Frohman, is minister of the First Presbyterian Church, Gary, Indiana. An alumnus of the University of California at Berkeley and Princeton Theological Seminary (M.Div.), Mr. Frohman has a friend who submitted this sermon to your editor with this comment: "Frohman acquired at Princeton that new spirit of proclamation—a commitment to preparation of sermons that inform, define, and relate the biblical élan to the contemporary ennui."

Text: Ezra 7:11-14. Nehemiah 1:1-2:10

WHERE were you this past Tuesday at 1:00 p.m. Mountain Daylight Time? This past Tuesday, I stood on the summit of Longs Peak in the Rocky Mountains, 14,256 feet above sea level. The climb and the view was the most spectacular of my hiking history. The view from 14,000 feet is a vista most people see only from an airplane. To the southeast, seventy miles away, I could see the tiny skyscrapers of Denver. To the north, all the way into Wyoming. To the west, half way to Utah. And below me in a 2500-foot vertical drop was the cobalt blue Chasm Lake.

It is very hard to describe the feeling of exhilaration, the impression of triumph, the perspective, the sense of having your entire system cleaned. Time and time again as I contemplated the scene, the following statement would cross my mind: "In the wilderness is the preservation of the world." I did feel somewhat preserved and renewed. Standing there on top of that mountain peak, I could not see the "crossings of the crowded ways of life," nor could I hear "the cries of race and clan." I could hear only the roar of the wind, see the beauty of the wilderness, and feel the absolute majesty of it all.

But because I have lived in the city

since I was nine years old, I always find myself comparing the city with the wilderness. Why can't we say, "In the city is the preservation of the world"? I have been disturbed lately with very negative attitudes many folks have toward the city. Everyone gripes about the city. The complaints are true and numerous: bad streets, bad housing, bad schools, bad transportation, high taxes, high cost of living, muggings, rapes, robberies. Sound familiar? You bet, and not only are the comments made about city services, or the lack thereof, but the urban church gets thrown in there, too. "I don't want to go there to worship," you may have heard someone exclaim. "I get depressed because the sanctuary is two thirds empty." Or, "Old First has no future because they keep digging into the endowment to pay the heating bill." Or, "All those kids that hang out on the steps make me nervous." Or, "How come the doors are always locked? I thought churches were supposed to be open." Consequently the statement, "In the city is the preservation of the world," seems to be the height of folly.

Why does it seem to be folly? Because we are living in a time of captivity. We, people of the city, have been taken into a mental and spiritual cap-

tivity which rivals the Babylonian captivity of the Hebrew people. The litany I have just recited about the woes of cities and churches is the same sad song we read in Psalm 137. "By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion. There on the willow trees we hung our harps, and our captors demanded of us songs saying, 'Sing to us one of the Songs of Zion.'"

How were we captured? First of all, we have been captured because the battle for the city has been loud and long. We have suffered battle fatigue. Secondly, we have been captured because we have not been equipped with the proper tactics to fight the battle.

(i)

The battle for us began in the 1950's when the first signs of battle fatigue began to take place. The Princeton sociologist, Gibson Winter, has appropriately named this fatigue "the suburban captivity of the churches," in which there was a rapid exit from the cities in the 1950's and 1960's to surrounding suburbs spurred on by the ready availability of FHA capital after the war. There was an attempted renaissance of the city during the Great Society era, but incredible mismanagement of funds by contractors with the government led to wholesale breakdown of urban reconstruction. Urban renewal brought some reconstruction, but it brought urban destruction and forced relocation of which the vast empty lots of our central cities testify. The beginning of the Nixon era first brought the urban policy of benign neglect of Daniel Moynihan and ended with the convulsive exit policies of the attempted dismantling of HUD and OEO. If the policies of the public sector were not enough, the

private sector financing of commercial and residential investment dried up. We know this withdrawal of investment dollars as "redlining."

The Church had its own battle tactics to save the city, but soon found itself out-classed and out-gunned by the principalities and powers that be. Many churches followed in the social service tradition of the Detroit Industrial Mission and other urban models which provided a needed and valuable style of urban ministry of the 1950's and early 1960's. As the Civil Rights Movement moved north and the Vietnam War developed, urban reconstruction tactics by churches were characterized by a wholesale adoption of the politics and tactics of protest.

As an almost unconscious religious affirmation of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, Harvey Cox wrote *Secular City* and Gibson Winter wrote *The New Creation as Metropolis* to give Christians some theological ammunition for urban existence. Well, scarcely was the ink dry on the manuscripts when our major cities erupted in the long hot summer of 1967 and 1968. Black rage was generated against the very institutions celebrated by Cox and Winter. From the cauldrons of the long hot summers were forged many exclusivist theologies of liberation, some of which have been useful and some of which have turned into a bitter narrowness of the late 1960's and early 1970's.

Since the early 1970's we find ourselves in a captivity of fatigue and broken spirits brought upon partly by the intensity of combating urban life and partly because of the worn out tactics of the protest used in that battle. Gone are the days of glamorous urban ministry. We find ourselves mocked by the memories of the "good old days"

as we are tormented by the captivity of nostalgia. "Why can't things be like they used to be," we sigh. This is the biblical equivalent of capitulating to "sing to us one of the Songs of Zion."

(ii)

How Can We Return from Our Captivity? How Do We Come out of Exile?

In this time of captivity, we turn again to the scriptures and are amazed to find people of faith who have actually been lower than we are, yet who have returned from captivity to re-establish themselves and their faith. There were two ancient people whose role in rebuilding the nation of Israel are the example for city churches to follow today. They are Ezra and Nehemiah.

Nehemiah was the cupbearer for King Artaxerxes; Ezra was a priest and scribe in exile in Babylon. What Nehemiah did for the body politic of Judaism, Ezra did for the soul. In the Old Testament, understanding of faith, the two parts of nurture and mission, Ezra and Nehemiah, are inseparable. And so must be our understanding of urban ministry in the last quarter of the 20th century.

Nehemiah's mission was to rebuild the walls and political structures of a fallen Israel. Like Joseph, the cupbearer to the Egyptian Pharaoh, Nehemiah felt very intensely about the land of his forefathers. When he heard of the condition of his kinsmen in their life amidst the fire-ruined rubble of Nebuchadnezzar's urban renewal program, he wept and mourned for days as many of us have mourned the slow strangulation death of many of our own cities. But Nehemiah was not content to sing the songs of Zion in Babylon. He requested the king send him back across the windswept grasslands

of the fertile crescent to Jerusalem "to the city and graves of my fathers that I may rebuild it." Artaxerxes sent him as the governor of the Babylonian province of Judah in 444 B.C. There in Jerusalem he found the city in rubble and the political and religious structures ineffective and oppressive. The conditions are catalogues in the Book of Malachi. The record of Nehemiah is impressive. There he discreetly used his authority as Governor; he re-wrote many of the civil laws for the city; and he took a housing census and began an urban housing program. He treated with justice the needs of the destitute of the city; he called a general meeting of Jerusalem residents and informed them of his intentions to rebuild the walls of the City; and then went about his work, politely listening to the grippers, foot-draggers and opposers of progress and then ignoring them when they needed to be ignored.

Nehemiah was not alone in his efforts. His contemporary was Ezra, the rabbi and scribe. Ezra's contribution made Nehemiah's work possible. Ezra brought the Torah to Jerusalem, the first five books of the Bible that had been painfully written down by Jews in exile. This single act so inspired and revitalized the worship of God in Jerusalem, that Israel, a nation crippled and on its knees from the oppressors' whip, stood up. In bringing back this worship code to Jerusalem, Ezra gave the people a reason to rebuild the city. It symbolized that God had re-entered Jerusalem and Hebrew worship celebrated that the obituary of the city had been prematurely written.

The perspective of Ezra and Nehemiah points to a whole new strategy of urban ministry. If people of a congregation are going to be involved in urban ministry, then they must develop min-

istries that build the congregation as a worshipping-nurturing community of people. People come to church because they need and want the saving and accepting power of Jesus Christ. People cannot survive unless they have power and energy to survive. The Church is where you get the power to live.

It has been my experience that worship and the nurture that worship affords is the very life-source and energizer of urban ministry. It became popular during the 1960's to depreciate worship, to say that Sunday morning was secondary or tertiary. This mythology espoused the notion that real relevance, and hence the kingdom of God, was only to be discovered on the street and that Jesus was only found in the marketplace of the Secular City. As one who has worked the streets, and poolhalls, broad avenues and board rooms of several major cities in the past ten years, as one who has worked with senior citizens and counter culture hippies, as one who has helped tear down houses and get houses rehabilitated, as one who has seen strong men burn out and dynamic women turn sour, as one who has seen empty churches, full churches and struggling churches participate in all of these ministries, I can say with confidence that the people and the churches which are effective today are those who like Ezra, have taken the time to realize that man does not live by bread alone, but by the redemptive and restorative Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

(iii)

Let me say the same thing in non-religious terms: Urban ministry that is effective is that which enhances the self-interest of the urban church as an organization. Like Nehemiah in Jerusalem, so too, we of the Church of

Jesus Christ must not be afraid of discreetly using our authority as leaders in the city. My experience has been that churches who dare to take leadership in the city and community, in the name of the church, infuse the city and the congregation itself with a vigor of faith and hope that social service organizations, community organizations and city agencies cannot provide. There is nothing magical about this phenomenon. It is just a fact of urban life. People still trust the church and look to and expect the church to be leaders in the city.

The example of Ezra and Nehemiah also means a given congregation must be careful not to burn out. It is my firm conviction that without the city church, urban life becomes strident and meaningless and cut-throat. Therefore, the city church must minister in a way that builds its own financial resources, rather than blows them away in short-term, low-yield projects. City churches must pick three or four projects on which to work, and not twenty or thirty. City churches must work on winable issues, not on vast social problems. City churches must work on issues that build citizen power through independent, non-partisan citizen organizations.

I began this sermon with the statement of folly, "In the city is the preservation of the world." What I have lifted up for you today is that "In the church is the preservation of the city."

We have a great opportunity ahead of us in the next few years. Today the spirit of the Lord is upon us and we hear the good news of the prophet: "They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations, they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations. They shall be restorers of streets in which to dwell."

God's Affirmative Action

Sermon by DANIEL L. MIGLIORE

A native of Pittsburgh, Pa., the Rev. Daniel L. Migliore is an alumnus of Westminster College, Pa. (A.B.), Princeton Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and Princeton University (Ph.D.). Since 1962 Dr. Migliore has taught at Princeton in the Department of Theology and is the author of many reviews and articles in professional journals. This sermon was given in the Nassau Presbyterian Church, Princeton, N.J. in the summer of 1978.

Text: Matt. 20:1-16

THE parables of Jesus speak to us again and again with astonishing power. They capture us with their simplicity, their vivid imagery, their realism. Above all, the parables of Jesus seize our attention and stretch our imagination by their daring comparison of the kingdom of God with everyday happenings.

The parables refer us to our common, familiar world of experience for hints and intimations of the kingdom of God. Nothing could be farther from abstract speculation about God than the parables of Jesus. They speak of God indirectly by pointing to the element of surprise in the dramas of daily life. The parables of Jesus do not draw us away from the everyday world but into the mystery of God's grace and judgment in the midst of our world. By confronting us with the extraordinary dimension of ordinary events, the parables challenge us to decide whether we are really open and ready for the kingdom of God.

Like all the parables of Jesus, the parable of the workers in the vineyard compels us to think about the presence and purpose of God in relation to the most mundane affairs. This parable plunges us into the ambiguous world of work and unemployment, of contracts and negotiations, of pay scales

and bonuses, of charges of injustice and favoritism.

Perhaps the setting of the parable in the tough world of economics is one reason why it has never enjoyed the popularity of such parables as the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Thinking of God's grace and judgment in terms of personal encounters or family relationships comes much easier to us than does thinking of the presence of God in the economic and political spheres of life.

There is, however, a second reason why the parable of the workers in the vineyard is troublesome for us. Quite frankly we find ourselves identifying with the characters of the story who are reprimanded at the end. We find ourselves asking whether the workers who registered a complaint did not have a point, whether payment could not have been made to all the workers in a generous but less provocative way, whether the decision of the owner was not reached and defended in a rather arbitrary manner. No doubt this parable triggers more defensive responses than do most parables of Jesus. Who feels any sympathy for the Priest and the Levite who crossed to the other side when they saw the wounded person lying on the road? Who does not feel some sympathy for those who have

worked hardest and longest in the parable of the workers in the vineyard?

But perhaps this parable has special importance for us precisely because we find it unsettling and even irritating. If we look at the story a little more closely, we may discover that the situation it describes has an uncanny resemblance to our own. The parable of the workers in the vineyard is a story about a surprising act of generosity that stretches our understanding of justice to the utmost limits; it is a story about a controversy over preferential treatment, about a kind of "affirmative action" taken by an employer and the deep resentment which this arouses in honest, respectable people.

The plot of the parable is clear and simple. The story moves quickly to the dramatic confrontation between the owner of the vineyard and his embittered workers. The characters are real-life figures rather than the super-heroes and the arch-villains of fantasy. Look again at each of them.

(a)

There is, first, the owner of the vineyard. He is obviously the central figure of the story. He is portrayed as a competent and experienced manager of his property. The time for the harvest of the grapes has come, and he realizes he has need of a large labor force. If the grapes are not harvested promptly, they will begin to spoil or may even be destroyed by heavy rain or pestilence. Very early in the morning he goes to town to hire a group of workers. He enters into an agreement with them to pay one denarius each for a day's work. Whatever the equivalent value of this coin in today's currency, we are no doubt to understand that it was considered a fair day's wage at that time.

After a few hours, the owner sees that he needs additional workers. So he goes out again to hire others, a second, a third, a fourth time, promising in each case to pay a fair wage. Finally, late in the day, on his fifth excursion to town, he discovers some unemployed people still standing around in the marketplace. He needs their help, brief as it will be, just as they need whatever they may earn for themselves and their families; so he sends them to work in the vineyard with the others.

When the time comes for paying the workers, we find that the owner is more than a hard-working, well-organized, prudent, scrupulous businessman. He is also a person of unusual generosity. He instructs his paymaster to give a denarius, a full day's wage, to all the workers, including those who entered the fields late in the day. When the workers hired first grumbled because they did not receive more than the others, the owner defended his action. He had not done anyone an injustice although he had exceeded what justice, narrowly construed, would have required. He had exercised his freedom in a most surprising way. He had been generous to those who seemed to count least. He had favored those who would have received very little had they been paid strictly according to scale. To the complaining workers his action seemed unfair and scandalous. But why should it not be celebrated rather than criticized? His purpose had not been to undermine justice but to be generous to those most in need of it.

(b)

Now consider the workers who received the unexpected wage. We can easily imagine how they felt. They were astonished and we hope, very

grateful. Late that afternoon they had been hanging around in the marketplace with nothing to do and little to look forward to. True, we are not told that unemployment was a familiar condition for these people, that their status today was a repetition of yesterday and the many days before that. Nor are we told that without work they would be unable to secure the necessities of life for themselves and their families. But why do we have to be told these things? We do not have to be told that rain falls downward or that it is wet. In any case, there is nothing in the parable to support the assumption that these people, still unemployed late in the day, were lazy or incompetent. When the owner of the vineyard asked them why they were still idle so late in the day, they replied: "Because no one has hired us." We have no reason to call this a lame excuse. It was a simple statement of fact. They had not been given the same chance to work as the others.

The town market in the ancient world was the place where those seeking work gathered. The fact that workers were still in the marketplace at the last hour of the working day is proof that they wanted to work. Evidently they had been passed over when others were hired, but if so, we are not told why. We are told only that when the opportunity to work came to them, they seized it. They went into the fields even if only for a brief period and for what would surely be a tiny wage, far from adequate to meet their needs and the needs of those dependent on them. We have little difficulty imagining their joy, their new hope, their emergent self-respect when they were finally hired and unexpectedly received for their labor a full day's pay.

(c)

Consider, finally, the workers who were hired first. They were honest, industrious, reliable people. Hired early, they were already at work in the fields shortly after dawn. Having agreed to a wage which seemed fair to them, they did what they had contracted to do. They worked hard all day long while the sun beat down on them. At the end of the day, the owner had no criticism of their work, none whatsoever. Indeed, he called their representative, "friend." But it was precisely because they had done their work so well that these workers were outraged when they received no more for their labor than did those who worked only one hour. These protestors were not troublemakers. They were decent folk insisting on justice and fair play. They had nothing against their fellow workers. They simply felt that it was unfair of the employer to favor those who had worked least by giving everyone the same wage. We who put so much emphasis on reward according to achievement and merit can certainly understand their indignation, their resentment, their bitterness. If the owner wanted to be generous, why was he not impartial in his generosity? Why did he not give everyone what he deserved plus a bonus to all?

We are not told how these workers responded when the owner explained that their complaint was rooted in jealousy rather than justice, that they had received what they had been promised, and that they seemed unable to approve an act which brought unexpected benefit and joy to others. However, the possibility that the confrontation ended in deep alienation is indicated

by the word of the owner to these workers: "Take your pay and go."

In order to allow this parable to make its point as sharply as possible, we must ask about the particular situation to which it is addressed. The parable has a history, and its message has been addressed to different audiences. In its original setting in the life and ministry of Jesus the parable of the workers in the vineyard, like the parable of the prodigal son, most probably was Jesus' answer to those who criticized his ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation among sinners and despised people. Jesus befriended these people and even ate at the same table with them. According to Jesus' critics, it was outrageous that lawbreakers and outcasts should be invited into the kingdom of God along with devout, spiritually superior, law-abiding people. Was it not a blasphemous parody of the justice of God for these sinners to be treated just like the righteous?

So Jesus told the story of the owner of a vineyard who acted with what we might call "benign partiality." "I want to give to those who were hired last the same as I give to you," says the owner to his critics. His act is partial in the sense that it cannot be justified by the principle of exact proportion between achievement and reward. But his partiality is benign because it aims not at the elevation of some people over others but at the good of all; not at the exclusion of some but at the inclusion of all. In its original setting, this is a parable of the freedom of God to extend forgiveness and acceptance to the outcast and the despised.

There is, however, a double-edge to the parable. It describes not only the benign partiality of the owner of the vineyard but also the hostility and re-

sentment which this arouses. The parable emphasizes both the mystery of grace and the resentment which this meets in persons who anxiously guard their special status and rank. The parable thus gives expression to a central theme of the ministry of Jesus and of the message of the whole Bible: the partiality of God toward those considered least deserving and the resentment which this creates. The partiality of God toward the poor and the outcast, toward the losers and latecomers of this world, arouses hostility among decent, law-abiding persons who are inclined to cloak their resentment in self-serving conceptions of justice.

Already in the Gospel of Matthew the parable has been readdressed. The message of the benign partiality of God and the resentment which this encounters is directed now to the church and indeed to the leaders and long-standing members of the church. Matthew sets the parable in the context of questions of the disciples as to whether they will be specially rewarded for their long and faithful service. Will they not receive more for their service than other Christians? It is now the followers of Jesus who must be addressed by the parable once addressed to the Pharisees and critics of Jesus. The parable now speaks to the church of Matthew's time, making the same point but cutting a different way: Do not try to limit God's goodness toward people you consider less deserving than you. If you do, you may be spiritually destroyed by your own resentment and bitterness.

Today the parable must once again be readdressed. It must be addressed to us here and now. We are the ones who are now questioned by the parable. Are we ready for the kingdom of God? Do

we begrudge God's goodness? Do we resent God's benign partiality?

We begin to grasp the concrete meaning of this parable for us when we listen to it in the context of the controversy about affirmative action programs in American society today. Affirmative action refers to positive steps taken by the institutions of our society, by corporations, unions, universities, professions, churches, to bring more people who have been demonstrably disadvantaged by chronic racial and sexual discrimination into the mainstream of the life of our society.

As the Supreme Court decision in the Bakke case and public reactions to that decision show, the American people are not at all unanimous about the principle of affirmative action and even less agreed as to the proper ways to implement it. Christians cannot pretend to have specially revealed, ready-made answers to the difficult questions of how such programs can be fairly administered. Certainly we cannot suggest anything so naive as that the parable of the workers in the vineyard provides a blueprint for such programs. But the message of the parable can and should shape and reshape our attitudes as Christians toward affirmative action. An affirmative action program in a business, a university, a church agency may be a concrete parable of the kingdom of God. Why should Christians today not be sensitive and imaginative and free enough to discern in affirmative action a hint, a parable of the grace and judgment of God in our society?

Any attentive reading of the parable of the workers in the vineyard or indeed of the Bible as a whole must recognize that there is something like partiality in the grace of God, that God is benignly partial to the weak, the poor, the out-

cast, the disadvantaged, and that this outrageous partiality of grace makes strong, hard-working, successful, decent people terribly vulnerable to the temptations of bitterness and resentment.

The parable of the workers in the vineyard warns that there are great dangers in this resentment of decent persons to God's partiality toward the disadvantaged. We should heed these warnings as we confront the issue of affirmative action in our universities and professional schools, in our police and fire departments, and in the governing bodies of churches across the land.

(i)

In the first place, we are warned not to allow a spirit of resentment to blind us to the chance to love. The owner of the vineyard gave the workers hired first more than their just wage. He gave them a secret gift. He gave them the opportunity to love, the chance to rejoice in the well-being of others, the possibility of saying yes to those in need. The chance to love is the chance to be truly human.

(ii)

Second, we are warned not to overlook the privileged treatment we have enjoyed. The workers hired first failed to recognize that there was something inscrutable and mysterious about the fact that they had been hired first whereas, for unknown reasons, others had been hired later and some not until the last hour. Perhaps those hired first believed it was because they were more industrious, stronger, more intelligent, but who could say this was true beyond the shadow of a doubt? Was there not an element of mystery, of grace, in their being selected first, and was it not there-

fore a little too self-congratulatory to pretend that they had not also received special favor?

In his statement on the Bakke case, Justice Blackmun noted that many people are disturbed about a program of admissions where race is an element of consciousness, a factor in decision-making, yet all of us know very well that "institutions of higher learning . . . have given conceded preferences to those possessed of athletic skills, to the children of alumni, to the affluent who may bestow their largess on the institutions, and to those having connections with celebrities, the famous and the powerful." In other words, we wink at preferential treatment as long as it benefits us. Our resentment therefore threatens to turn us into hypocrites.

(iii)

Third and finally, the result of resentment to the working of grace in our common life is that people who are otherwise friendly, hard-working, responsible folk become estranged from the source of life and goodness which sustains us all. There is no apocalyptic scene of judgment in the parable, no wailing and gnashing of teeth, no stoking of eternal fires. There is only the word of the owner to his resentful workers: "Take your pay and go." In the early hours of the morning, owner and workers had been of one spirit; later in the day all the workers had labored together toward a common goal. Where once there was communion and solidarity, there is now estrangement and hostility. "Take your pay and go." This final word of separation is judgment enough.

God's love for the despised and mar-

ginated people of this world is the original and irrevocable case of affirmative action. "In Christ all the promises of God are Yes" (2 Cor. 1:20). God's mighty Yes to us in Jesus Christ is unique. We have all been included in his affirmative action. God forgives sinners, God reconciles those at enmity with him and with others, God liberates the oppressed. And all the resentment with which we respond to his affirmative action he takes into himself in the passion of his Son on Golgotha. This affirmative action of God is not to be confused, not to be identified with the little affirmative actions which we are called to take in our schools, our churches, our factories. God's kingdom is not to be confused with our programs of justice and freedom for all. All of our programs are fallible and in need of continuous criticism and reform. We are capable of doing terrible things with good intentions. Nevertheless, while our small affirmative actions are never identical with God's kingdom, they may be parables, hints, anticipations of that kingdom, and herein they have their importance and their urgency.

So in a time when the pros and cons of affirmative action programs in our society will be increasingly debated, in a time when the backlash against such programs is probably on the rise, it is good to consider anew the message of this parable of the workers in the vineyard, this parable of an act of benign partiality and of the ensuing resentment which leads to estrangement. "Do you begrudge my generosity?" asks the owner of his aggrieved workers. This question once addressed to the critics of Jesus and then to his early followers is now addressed to us.

Not by Bread Alone

A Lenten Homily

by THOMAS W. MANN

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Text: Deuteronomy 8

I MUST confess that I have prepared this sermon with considerable fear and trembling. Those who presume to preach on the book of Deuteronomy will be immune from such trepidation only to their peril. After all, any sermon on Deuteronomy is already a sermon on a sermon, and the latter is attributed to no less a preacher than Moses, who, everyone knows, was the greatest preacher who ever lived.

We approach this text in the spirit of the Lenten season. Traditionally, this is a season of giving up, a period of relinquishing, and this relinquishing often takes the form of fasting. Lent is a time for giving up the bread of life, as a symbol of that deeper relinquishing of the soul in penitential contemplation. And, in recent years, fasting has become a sign of participation in a world where relinquishing the bread of life is simply not an option for millions of people.

In the light of this, it would seem, at first glance, that Deuteronomy 8 is a text most fitting for the Lenten season. Just as Lent traditionally covers forty days, so our text is concerned with forty years. Like Lent, this period is seen as a time of affliction and hunger, a period of discipline and testing,

through which the wilderness generation came to know the Lord. Just as in Lent we look forward to the new life of the resurrection, so in our text Israel looks forward to the new life in the promised land. And, above all, our text contains the classic line, quoted by Jesus in his own period of fasting and temptation: "humankind does not live by bread alone, but humankind lives by everything which proceeds from the mouth of the Lord."

But, as fitting as the text may seem for Lent, those who read the *whole* chapter carefully will, I suspect, perceive a certain irony. The irony lies in the fact that the text speaks not only about affliction and hunger, but also about affluence and satiety. It speaks not only about the wilderness, but also about the good and fertile land, "a land of fountains and springs, a land of wheat and barley, a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing." How is one to understand this juxtaposition? Why does the author speak of hunger and satiety in the same breath? What do the afflictions of the wilderness wandering have to do with the good life in the new land? And, most of all, what does it mean to say, in *this* con-

text, that "humankind does not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of Yahweh"?

I want to make just two observations about what the text is saying, in connection with the observance of Lent.

(i)

In the first place, the author shows a tremendous appreciation for the blessings of life. Bread and wine, herds and flocks, silver and gold, are not intrinsically evil, and the *relinquishment* of the bread of life should not be confused with a piety which dichotomizes the spiritual and the material. Life before God is inherently both material and spiritual. Perhaps the key word here is "alone." The text says that we do not live by bread alone; but it does not say that we live by the word of God alone. The life which God gives to us includes both word and bread, both soul and body. We are not necessarily living holy lives because we have given up some token of earthly existence. Renunciation of the material, and devotion to the spiritual, do not intrinsically signify righteousness before God. True obedience to the word necessarily involves appreciation for the bread.

(ii)

This leads to the second, and final, observation.* It is interesting that the author does not suggest fasting as a form of remembrance of the testing in the wilderness. In fact, the text does not recommend any *form* of remembrance at all. There is no prescribed rite which Israel is to observe, no liturgy which she

* While the text does not support a spiritual piety divorced from worldly existence, on the other hand it is also concerned less with external religion than with internal fidelity.

is to celebrate. The Deuteronomist is simply not *interested* in the outward manifestations of piety. Instead, his concern is with the attitude of the heart. It is the internal orientation of the people, as a community of faith, which consumes his interest. Just as Yahweh tested Israel in the wilderness, to know what was in her heart, so Israel is to know in *her* heart—to recognize and affirm internally—the parental grace of God.

Still, the author's main concern is not the temptations in the past, but those of the future. The lesson of the wilderness is understood to be aimed at Israel's ongoing life before Yahweh in the future, in the bounteous new land. And here the irony of the relationship between wilderness and new land is even more apparent. The wilderness wandering, which was perceived as punishment, was in fact instruction in the grace of God. The new land, which could be perceived as reward, or as achievement, is in fact the gracious *gift* of God. Both wilderness and fertile land are part of God's parental care, and yet neither is romanticized as a sure sign of human worthiness *before* God.

In short, the irony of the whole chapter turns on the relationship between life and death, hunger and satiety, remembering and forgetting, gratitude and arrogance. In the wilderness, where Israel expected to die, she found out what life really meant. In the new land, where life will be so bountiful, Israel may be led into death. Similarly, the affliction which Israel would naturally like to forget, she is told to remember; the good times to which she naturally looks forward, she is told to beware. In the end, the wilderness was

a test of hunger, the new land, a test of satiety—and the latter is the more dangerous.

Like the wilderness, the new land too will be a test of the heart. In the midst of affluence, Israel will be tempted to lift up her heart, not in gratitude, but in arrogance. She will easily *forget* the God who led her in the former time of trial. "Beware lest you say in your heart, 'My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth.'"

The irony of the text lies in the fact that both affliction *and* affluence, both the threat of death *and* the promise of new life, confront the community of faith with the most serious of temptations—the temptation of forgetting. Forgetting is not simply a mental lapse of memory, but a fundamental and active distortion of Israel's relationship with God. The attitude of the heart

is not only internal, but involves the whole corporate body; it involves everything that the people do and say.

For Israel, the time of affliction in the wilderness has not partitioned off as a separate part of her past, to be quickly forgotten once the new life had come. It seems to me that we should understand Lent in much the same way. Lent is not simply an independent part of the ecclesiastical year. Relinquishing the blessings of life is justifiable only when it derives from and returns to thanksgiving to the source from whom all blessings flow. If it is genuine, Lent is only an outward sign of an inner attitude, an attitude of humble gratitude for the new life which we receive, and a recognition that life comes both as word and bread. The ashes on the forehead are only the remains of the fire; the fire itself must ever burn in the heart.

Bultmann and the Proclamation of the Word

by RONALD E. SLEETH

OVER twenty years ago, Theodore O. Wedel wrote a perceptive article entitled, "Bultmann and Next Sunday's Sermon."¹ It was the author's intention to introduce Rudolf Bultmann to American preachers by demonstrating his importance for the preaching office. Though by no means uncritical, Wedel, nevertheless, affirmed that in his work the Marburg scholar had the proclaimers of the Gospel in mind.² Wedel claimed in regard to Bultmann's influence, "As one who is arousing the churches to the urgency of proclaiming the good news to *our* age he may be one to whom can be applied the words of the Old Testament: 'Who knows whether you have not come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?'"³

Now, approximately two years after Bultmann's death, there is need for a re-appraisal of his influence on the pulpit by delineating certain aspects of *his* theological pursuits which have bearing

¹ Theodore O. Wedel, "Bultmann and Next Sunday's Sermon." *Anglican Theological Review*, Vol. 39, 1957.

² For example, Wedel quarreled with Bultmann's term *demythologizing*. He contended that the preacher's task is the opposite of demythologizing, for the pulpit should present "an apologetic *for* the use in the Bible of imaginative symbols as conveying truths which defy historical literalism." Perhaps it is a semantic problem. Wedel's strictures could be obviated by the word *re-mythologize*.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

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on homiletics. Much critical comment has been written on this multi-faceted scholar since his death. His work as a New Testament scholar, existential philosopher, and theologian is being appraised and will continue to be. The purpose here is to examine his contribution to preaching theory and thereby to the Christian pulpit.

It goes without saying that Rudolf Bultmann is a controversial figure in the theological world. His advocates and critics are both highly vocal. It may be too strong to aver as one writer does, that

"The evaluation of any author is to be done only after a fair and careful reading of his own writings; but this has been a problem in Bultmann's case, especially in America, where the merchants of religious fear and slogan warfare inspire burning before learning."⁴

Jeske certainly is right, though, in his contention that "Bultmann was too conservative for liberals and too liberal for conservatives. To the former he appeared too indebted to the Lutheran tradition, his theology too focused on the Bible; to the latter he appeared destructive to both."⁵

Whatever may be the final judgments

⁴ Richard Jeske, "Rudolf Bultmann 1884-1976," *Dialog*, Vol. 17, Winter 1978, p. 19.

⁵ *Ibid.*

of his labors, it is clear that Bultmann's towering figure will dominate scholarship in the fields of New Testament and theology for years to come. In regard to preaching, his impact is also powerful and will continue to be. For, whatever one's view of Bultmann's theological content and methodology, there should be no question whatsoever that he is an inveterate friend of preachers. Wedel's observation that he had the proclaimers of the Gospel in mind is certainly correct. Whatever else one might say of Bultmann's theological work, it was done in service to the Church. More particularly, it was a servant theology subservient to the proclamation of the Word—*preaching* the Gospel. Schubert Ogden maintains that "we have every reason to expect that any theology claiming serious attention should prove its relevance for authentic Christian preaching."⁶ This comment coming from a review of Bultmann's Marburg sermons applies to the theological stance of the book.

The Importance of Preaching

The importance given to the act of preaching by Bultmann is obvious to any careful reader of his writings, for they are replete with the emphasis upon service to the life of the Church and to the task of preaching. It shocks some—as it did Jaspers—to know that a scholar of Bultmann's stature who had shaken the theological foundations in so many areas was a devout churchperson, a preacher himself, and one who felt the salvation-occurrence was in the act of

preaching *and only there*. Bultmann did not claim to be a great preacher, but he took the assignment seriously. As Kendrick Grobel notes perceptively in speaking of Bultmann (and hopefully for all of us), "to a true Lutheran there are no 'great preachers' (are there any to a true *Christian*?) but only responsible and less responsible ones."⁷ Bultmann himself took the responsibility seriously as a natural expression of both his churchmanship and his theology.

The latter we have already emphasized, and its importance cannot be stated too strongly. Grobel, an outstanding New Testament scholar in his own right and the translator of Bultmann's two-volume work on the New Testament, states the servant-to-the-church nature of Bultmann's studies of the New Testament.

"... Bultmann regards all interpreting of the New Testament as ancillary. It is no mere luxury of a few leisured professors, their graduate students, and the rare thinking layman. No, it is a servant discipline (and a hard working one!) ancillary to the Church's proclamation."⁸

Interestingly enough, then, two of the major theological figures of our century, Karl Barth and Rudolf Bultmann, while differing in many other respects, are at one with their emphasis upon the doctrine of the Word of God and the attendant corollary of the centrality of preaching.⁹

⁷ Kendrick Grobel, "The Practice of Demythologizing," *Journal of Bible and Religion*, Vol. 27, pp. 28-29.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁹ "Bultmann's doctrine of the Word of God is just as high as Karl Barth's, but with almost exclusive emphasis upon Barth's third

⁶ Schubert M. Ogden, Review of Rudolf Bultmann, *The World and Beyond*, Westminster Bookman, December, 1960, pp. 8ff. Though applied to Bultmann in this instance, the quotation would be true for Ogden as well.

Definition of Preaching

For Bultmann, however, the centrality of preaching was not a pious shibboleth born out of his understanding of the Church or out of his scholarly pursuits as a churchman. Proclamation was central as a theological affirmation to be sure, but it had very specific content coincident with his studies in exegesis, and this primacy can be seen in these exegetical works, books on the New Testament, articles of various kinds, and in his own sermons.

Similar to both Luther and Barth, Bultmann believed that preaching is God's Word in human speech. God through Christ speaks to us through the proclamation of the preacher:

"... the sermon is the proclamation of the Word of God as attested in the Bible, that it must be understood as an address which strikes the heart, and in that address Jesus Christ himself speaks to us."¹⁰

Or:

"Proclamation is *personal address*. It is authoritative address, the address of the Word of God, which, paradoxically, is spoken by ... the preacher."¹¹

And, again in his own words, with a definition of preaching as precise as one would be likely to find in Bultmann, or anywhere else:

"True Christian preaching is there-

form, the living Word of God speaking now through Scripture and preacher to living men." *Ibid.*

¹⁰ Franz Peerlinck, *Rudolf Bultmann als Prediger*. Hamburg: H. Reich Evangelischer Verlag, 1970. Quoted in Jeske, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

¹¹ Rudolf Bultmann, "General Truths and Christian Proclamation." To Friedrich Gogarten on his 70th birthday. Tr: Schubert M. Ogden, 1957.

fore a proclamation which claims to be the call of God through the mouth of man and, as the word of authority, demands belief. It is its characteristic paradox that in it we meet *God's* call in *human* words."¹²

How reminiscent are these views of Bultmann's with those of others who have contended that the Word of God cannot be separated from its proclamation. The Gospel is a *preached* Gospel. The content cannot be separated from its delivery. Though assumed to be strictly a Lutheran view, this "high" perspective of preaching has roots in primitive Christianity, can be traced throughout Christian history, and is embraced today by many preachers and scholars whose theological and denominational spectrums are wide and varied—both Catholic and Protestant.¹³

Bultmann's understanding of preaching as God's Word spoken in the mouth of the preacher is followed naturally by what is now called Word-Event theology. The preached word reveals God's Word in the event of proclamation through the words of the preacher addressed to hearers, and thereby creates an Event not *about* the Christian faith, but the Christian faith itself. That is, preaching is not talking *about* the Gospel, it *is* the Gospel. For Bultmann, "the sermon (every *true* sermon as released Word of God) is part and parcel of the salvation-occur-

¹² ———, "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized." Tr. Harold O. J. Brown. *Religion and Culture*, Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich, ed. by Walter Leibrich. New York: Harper & Bros. 1959, p. 237.

¹³ For a fuller discussion on this same theme and on the persons who would be close to Bultmann's view, see Ronald E. Sleeth, *Proclaiming The Word*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1964. Chapter 1.

rence itself."¹⁴ The *event* of salvation is inextricably related to the preaching of the Word.

The indivisibility of the Word (of God) with words (speech) reveals the concern Bultmann had for language and undoubtedly presaged much of the present discussion in that area. Words, in a sense, bring God who is unseen into being. The words, then, bring about a reality which affects our own existence.

"... God advenes in language and nowhere else. If Jesus was not raised into language, he was not resurrected at all. The resurrection of Jesus is the fact that the New Testament story of Jesus has the power to enable its hearers to exist in trust instead of in self-securing, trusting the one Jesus called Father even without knowing otherwise who he is. Whoever hears such a kerygma knows, in the hearing, the all-determining reality that the word 'God' signifies."¹⁵

Bultmann's concern for the Word of God in the mouths of preachers with his emphasis upon language, does not give—as one might suppose—inordinate power to the preacher's role. Contemporary preachers often feel that views of preaching such as Bultmann's elevate the preacher, causing ontological *angst* as well as awe. The point, however, as with Luther, is not to elevate the *preacher*, but *preaching*.

"What they preach is not their own thoughts and judgments, but the call of God, which they must proclaim, whether they will or not. . . . The

words of such messengers are words with *authority*, with an authority such as human speech otherwise does not have."¹⁶

The preacher, then, does not present personal opinions and does not admonish or console the congregation with his or her own person. Nor, as Bultmann says in another place, does the preacher reflect the congregation's ideals, feelings, yearnings, or certainties. Certainly the preacher does not preach his or her own self—even one's own religious life. The preacher does stand, however, within the congregation. Obviously, then, the Word of God is addressed also to the preacher. In that sense the preacher does preach *self*. Or, to be more precise, the preacher preaches *to* himself or herself. Preachers, then, preach a Word not their own which addresses both the congregation and themselves without reflecting either's personal feelings, ideals, or special interests. In other words, the pulpit proclaims a *kerygma*, a *heralding* addressed to both congregation and preacher, and not simply general or secular truths.

General and Secular Truths

Preaching is personal address proclaiming a message of Good News where the very act of proclamation fuses the kerygma and the preaching of it into the salvation-occurrence itself. Therefore, proclamation cannot be conceived of as preaching truths available to everyone naturally. This very interesting idea is unfolded in two articles Bultmann wrote paying tribute to Friedrich Gogarten and Paul Tillich. The first, entitled "General Truths and

¹⁴ K. Grobel, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁵ Robert P. Scharlemann, "The Systematic Structure of Bultmann's Theology." *Dialog*, Vol. 17, Winter 1978, p. 35.

¹⁶ Rudolf Bultmann, "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized," *op. cit.*, p. 237.

Christian Proclamation," was written for Friedrich Gogarten on his seventieth birthday. The second article called, "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized" appears in a *Festschrift (Religion and Culture)* in honor of Paul Tillich. The intent and theme of both articles are similar.

Bultmann claims that general truths are truths which are available to everyone because they arise from man himself. They arise from our human situation and our own reflections on our joys and sorrows, valid for all of us. These truths are like proverbs which all persons can say to themselves, and they are addressed to everyone. Preaching, on the other hand, is the address of the Word of God, having its meaning in being addressed to us personally and immediately—here and now. Proclamation is a message we cannot say to ourselves. We cannot carry the truth of the Gospel around with us as a possession; that would make it a general truth. Faith grasps the Christian truth, and it is appropriated again and again, often with struggle, for it is not simply a truth that enlightens or informs, but is paradoxical—a scandal for us as "natural" human beings.

Pursuing this same theme, Bultmann compares genuine preaching with secularized preaching. Taking *art* as an example, he suggests that it is possible that art may become indirect preaching when it lays bare existence in its depths or focuses on human limitations and life's problematic nature, but that may be self rather than God speaking. Also, preaching is not espousing a philosophy for discussion and speculation. Rather, it is direct authoritative address which demands a response of faith. Nor should preaching be confused with teaching which seeks primarily to instruct and

interest. It is helpful if a sermon does both, but the real mission is to point up questions which are inherent in various areas of life, and the answers received in light of the Word of God. Even ethical instruction is not the sermon's goal. Rather, the sermon shows the congregation's need for forgiveness with the paradox that in the sermon human speech conveys God's forgiveness. Love, which is the heart of the ethical commandment, is obtainable if one has been freed from oneself for devotion to others. This freedom is not a natural attribute, but is an event that happens when a word of forgiveness is spoken. When that happens, a person is open to encounter the neighbor.

Preaching *doctrine* receives the same treatment as propagating philosophy, teaching, or ethical instruction. Doctrine is not direct address; it is not a word which demands faith. The language of theology can formulate the content of preaching, but to state that is not preaching. A person can be brought to the need for forgiveness by the doctrine of original sin, but the key point is the acceptance of its preaching by responding, "God be merciful to me a sinner," not by affirming a belief in the doctrine of original sin.

Even preaching about Jesus can be secularized if he is seen as simply an appearance in history, a hero, or a pious model. Preaching Jesus is not giving a historical report. True preaching proclaims him Lord. This old Christian confession, "Jesus Christ is Lord" is the heart of the Gospel. He enables us to live in the world, be raised above it, and free from it—even as He was. We understand the Lordship of Christ as the gift of freedom in which we become free from ourselves; thus, new persons. Responding to genuine preach-

ing means to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord, to trust and obey; it does not mean to accept certain doctrines about Christ. It is true confession, according to Bultmann, rather than acceptance of doctrines that distinguishes genuine preaching from secularized preaching. The Lord is present in the Word preached when Jesus Christ as Lord is proclaimed. The communication of that Word through personal address cannot be over-emphasized.

"... one may finally ask whether preaching can always be only in the spoken word, whether it cannot also occur *through silent action*. Certainly a deed, too, can have the nature of an address. But we are concerned with a deed which can be effective as Christian preaching, that is, not with any effects of the Christian religion in Western civilization but with the proof of Christian love of man for man. The act of love opens to him who receives it to become free from himself, as he is drawn into the kingdom of the rule of love and is guided to accept with it the human, spoken word of preaching as the Word of God."¹⁷

The Bible and Preaching

It comes as no surprise to assert that the Word of God comes through the Scriptures for Bultmann. It would be difficult to conceive anything different for a Lutheran New Testament scholar. Grobel makes the point adamantly in speaking of Bultmann's view of scripture and preaching:

"... Word of God . . . must be authorized. How can it be? By humbling itself to be nothing but exposit-

tion of a Word of God that once occurred. To that Word of old the Bible bears witness . . . *all* preaching is either expository or simply is not preaching."¹⁸

Though stringently stated, Bultmann himself would agree and writes that "What marks his [preacher's] sermon as proclamation is that it has as its text a word of Scripture and consists in the interpretation of that word."¹⁹

As was seen in the sections on the definition of preaching and in the comparison of secular preaching or general truths with authentic preaching, it is Jesus Christ who is the content of the kerygma we preach. Interestingly, in spite of the contention of those who believe Bultmann ignores the historical figure of Jesus, he contends that the message preached is a historical fact. "The content of the message is thus an event, a historical fact: the appearance of Jesus of Nazareth, his birth, but at the same time his work, his death and his resurrection."²⁰ Bultmann is saying that the kerygma is communication of a historical fact, but it is also more than that. The communication is more than mere communication. In regard to the both/and of the historical nature of the Christ-Event, Bultmann considers the perennial question of Jesus' preaching versus the Church's proclamation which included Jesus as the kerygma. Though not stating that Jesus' preaching was not Christian preaching and disregarding the question of whether Jesus' own preaching was hidden Christian preaching, he does point out

¹⁸ K. Grobel, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

¹⁹ R. Bultmann, "General Truths and Christian Proclamation."

²⁰ ———, "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized," *op. cit.*, p. 240.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 242.

that the preaching of the Church and the preaching of Jesus were not the same. In any event, His message became part of the Christian proclamation "in which the one proclaimed is at the same time present as proclaimer."²¹

Existential

No one thing causes more controversy regarding Bultmann's position than his concept of demythologizing. It can be considered alongside his existential motif—especially in connection with preaching—because these two ideas come to bear most dramatically at the point of communication. His use of the word *mythology* is actually not that complicated. We noted earlier that Wedel criticized Bultmann's use of the term de-mythology, but only because he felt that the biblical mythology could be interpreted as truth-conveying symbols rather than using other myths, i.e. demythology or remythology. Even Wedel, though, sees clearly the problem Bultmann is addressing, as would all who escape the fundamentalist approach to Scripture. In an endeavor to avoid literal interpretation of a three-story cosmology, the preacher *must* address the task of communicating the Gospel to our age, granting the ever-present need for responsibility in interpreting (reinterpreting?) the Scriptures.

George Stuart quotes Bultmann's own words that "Mythology is the use of imagery to express the other worldly in terms of this world and the divine in terms of human life, the other side in terms of this side."²² The controver-

sial word "de-mythologized" seems innocuously similar to "analogy" when viewed by Bultmann himself. Grobel further defines the term in a concrete, specific manner that leaves little doubt as to the meaning of demythologizing, and its importance for the pulpit and the pew:

"Bultmann discovered that it [the mythical] can also be demythologized by being existentialized, which means, to coin a word, relevantized: made relevant to man's actual existence where and how he lives today."²³

If Grobel's words do not convey in unmistakable terms the exact meaning, then Bultmann in his foreword to a book on his own preaching by Franz Peerlinck certainly makes clear his intent.

"... the task of preaching is the exposition of the Bible, ... the language of the Bible must be translated in such a way that the modern hearer can understand it, and that therefore the sermon must be oriented toward the actual situation of its hearers."²⁴

It is this latter emphasis upon the actual situation of the hearers that makes Bultmann's demythologizing so important, and in addition, brings the *now-ness* of his existentialism front and center. Grobel reminds us of this exact point when speaking of Bultmann's interpretation of the New Testament and its ancillary function to proclamation. Interpretation is not complete until it is proclaimed from the pulpit, but not

²¹ ———, "General Truths and Christian Proclamation," *op. cit.*

²² Quoted from *Kerygma and Myth* in George C. Stuart, "Demythologizing and

Preaching." *Encounter*, Vol. 19, No. 2. Spring 1958, p. 133.

²³ K. Grobel, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

²⁴ Quoted in Jeske, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

even then. There is still the great divide between the pulpit and the pew. Bridging that gulf provides the preacher with the greatest of challenges. "All biblical interpretation is complete only when it has brought the proclamation effectively into the man in the pew."²⁵ This means, of course, that even a paraphrase of scripture will not do. The sermon "must rather endow them [words of Scripture] with actuality, so that they can be heard here and now as *viva vox*, as having sprung from the immediate moment."²⁶ Such a stance not only gives preaching immediacy, but emphasizes once again that the act of preaching is itself the salvation-occurrence.

"one must really say not the revelation which *has occurred*, but the revelation which *is occurring*. For this communication does not make known a past historical fact; rather, the paradox is that, in this 'communication,' the occurrence of revelation constantly takes place anew. . . ."²⁷

The Gospel is proclaimed in the *now* as an eschatological event for us. We are called to enter the drama of death and resurrection as a means of entering new life in Christ. As Wedel graphically portrays it:

"The word 'decision'—and this, in turn, viewed with eschatological ultimates awesomely in mind—might be called Bultmann's theme song. . . . The preacher, clearly, is called upon to confront his hearers with the scandal of the Gospel as a scandal *now*. . . . Baptism involves more than a confession of belief that a man called

Jesus died and rose again. It means participation in that action. This is a drama in which *we* are on the stage."²⁸

Decision is important to Bultmann. Personal address calls for response from a particular congregation in a specific situation, as distinguished from general truths, for example, or secularized preaching. The call is nothing less than placing before the auditor a decision "whether he will belong to the old or to the new world, whether he will remain the old man or become a new man."²⁹

Finally, reminding us again of the nature of the kerygma, its presence in the now, and the decisiveness of our response, Bultmann states that:

"Believing in Christ does not mean holding high ideas about his person to be true, but believing in the Word, in which he speaks to us, through which he wants to become our Lord."³⁰

Conclusion

Two decades after Theodore Wedel's hope that Bultmann would have a positive effect on next Sunday's sermon, there is reason to believe that his influence has been significant. Granting that there are those who remain unaffected by the issues Bultmann raised, and others who have outright antipathy, there is little doubt that to any serious student, Bultmann has become a figure to be reckoned with, not only in the fields of New Testament and Theology, but also forcefully in the responsible work of the minister called to proclaim

²⁵ Grobel, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

²⁶ R. Bultmann, "General Truths and Christian Proclamation," *op. cit.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ Wedel, *op. cit.*, p. 6.

²⁹ R. Bultmann, "Preaching: Genuine and Secularized," *op. cit.*, p. 242.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 240.

the Word of God faithfully week by week.

His firmness in stating the primacy of preaching by no means makes him unique. It does place him in the stream of those who claim that preaching is based upon Revelation and the Word of God. That is to say, that God has and continues to be revealed in the proclamation of the Word. It is erroneous to consider such an affirmation as strictly Lutheran. Bultmann's stance is normative in the history of the Christian Church, and this high view of preaching has its counterparts in countless creeds which define the Church as being constituted by Word and Sacrament (i.e., the Church is where the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments duly administered). The coupling of Word and Sacrament also finds its way into the ordination vows of most Christian Churches. Therefore, to relegate Bultmann to a Lutheran parochialism, or label him just another Barthian, is to misread his work and his influence. While Barthians are often accused of a preaching that repeats a historic and static kerygma as if the verbal assertion would be efficacious in itself, Bultmann's existential emphasis would exclude him from that charge. The concern for communicating the Gospel is at the heart of demythologizing.

The emphasis upon the Gospel as a preached Gospel causes concern in some quarters, but the affirmation that the human word embodies God's Word should not seem unusual. In addition to the historical tradition of the Church that affirms it, scholars such as Bultmann stand clearly on that premise. The Word-Event movement has as its basis the belief that the Word spoken by words calls into being an event

which is the salvation-occurrence itself. Interestingly enough, that theological proposal is not unlike the interest in language and words as expressed by modern communication experts. The importance of the human voice and the use of words as the basis of communication among humans is only one example of this secular counterpart to Bultmann's concern.

Many of us fear any undue emphasis upon the role of the preacher which inculcates an authoritarian or dogmatic position. To assign such a high valence to the pulpit as Bultmann does causes both theological alarm and personal *angst*. Though one could not, or should not, minimize the awe associated with the proclamation of the Word, three important affirmations can be made. First, Bultmann does not confuse the role of the preacher with the preacher's task. That is, it is the preacher's work that is elevated, not the preacher. Second, the Word which the preacher has wrestled with in the Scriptures and addressed to the congregation paradoxically is not only delivered to others; it is also delivered to himself or herself. Third, it is the incarnational aspect of preaching which tempers the *mysterium tremendum* of the preaching office. The reverent awe of dealing with God's Word is mitigated by the faith claim that God has entrusted the revelatory Word to a human vessel. Just as in *the* Incarnation the Word became flesh, so it does now in the faithful and responsible proclamation of the Word.

One of the most important emphases of Bultmann which could influence the American pulpit profoundly is his admonishment concerning secular preaching and/or preaching on general truths, as contrasted with genuine preaching. There is a parallel between his warning

against preaching general truths and with our proclivity for "topical" preaching. Preaching "topical" sermons as opposed to "biblical" sermons surely dominates most pulpits. Seeking a *topic*, preaching upon it with or without biblical support compares with Bultmann's understanding of preaching general truths. Through his and others' emphasis have permeated the American scene—at least theoretically—pragmatically most American preachers (whatever the denomination or theology) tend to preach *topics*.

The antithesis, of course, is biblical preaching; that is, permitting the sermon to arise from the preacher's struggle with the text, which is our story and tells us who we are. Far from being a literal talisman, the Scripture contains the Christian's *Heilsgeschichte*, the kerygma for the Christian community, and the medium through which God has spoken and continues to speak.

Though to some, Bultmann may denigrate the historicity of the Christian faith, his emphasis upon kerygmatic preaching keeps one's focus on the death and resurrection of Jesus, as well as the birth, life, and teachings.

Finally, how can the preacher avoid the exultation associated with Bultmann's existential motif relative to the pulpit? Apart from whatever we believe about his philosophical base, his focus on communicating the *now-ness* of the Gospel can be exhilarating. Suppose, for example, the typical week-by-week preacher caught a glimpse of preaching that sent him or her into the pulpit, not simply to revivify the "old, old story," but to proclaim that this Gospel can be appropriated *now*, and as efficaciously as when it was first heard. Such a message would truly be Good News. Wedel's vision for next Sunday's sermon would be fulfilled, and we would all be indebted to the work of Rudolf Bultmann.

A Commencement Address—Re-Issued

by J. RITCHIE SMITH

THERE are certain illusions that we are prone to cherish as we leave the shelter of home and school to take our place in the army of the world's workers. They are bright visions of youth which vanish quickly as the mists of early morning disappear before the rising sun. The rude hand of time tears away the veil which divides the world of fact from the world of fancy, and we are confronted by the stern realities of life. So Wordsworth pictures the youth,

"Who by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended,
At length the man perceives it die
away
And fade into the light of common
day."

These illusions relate to ourselves, to the church and to the world. We are all in danger of thinking of ourselves more highly than we ought to think. Self-respect is a virtue, self-conceit is a vice, but who may draw the line between them and say where one ends and the other begins? The task of conscience would be much lighter if good and evil were always sharply distinguished; if every action and quality were either white or black. But there is a large intermediate zone of gray. Over against every virtue there is set a contrary vice, and one easily merges into the other. Vice masquerades as virtue, and virtue decays to vice. At what point does liberty turn to license? Just when does patience cease to be a virtue

This address, delivered to the Graduating Class of 1932, is re-printed at the request of an alumnus of the same year. The late J. Ritchie Smith, an alumnus of both Princeton University and the Theological Seminary, was professor of homiletics from 1914-1929.

and become mere weakness? When does meekness turn to cowardice? What line divides justice from revenge, and pity from maudlin sentiment? How may we distinguish self-conceit from self-respect? There are certain marks of self-conceit which are unmistakable—a sense of fancied superiority which leads us to stand apart from our fellowmen; a supreme confidence in our wisdom which persuades us that we are masters and not the ministers of the church. These are manifestations of self-conceit which have wrought immeasurable harm. The minister has no ex-officio grace and no supernatural wisdom is conferred upon him by ordination. The first requisite of a good minister is to be a good man, a humble holy follower of the Lord Jesus. Some years ago a cousin of mine wrote me in behalf of a church in a western city which was seeking a pastor. They had had several unfortunate experiences with ministers, and after speaking of various qualifications which they desired, he added, "We should like to have a Christian, if possible."

It is easy to think highly of ourselves before we have been put to the test; to dream that we are rich before we have begun to count our store; that we are strong while our powers are yet untried. The process of self-discovery is often painful. We awake from our dreams of commanding eloquence and crowded congregations to the stern fact that we are plain, ordinary, commonplace, are not brilliant or eloquent, will never fill

a large place in the church or in the world. Our fond parents may give a glowing report of us in the morning of life, and our tomb stone may eulogize us at its close; but in between there is a sad falling off. The sudden descent from the gilded heights of fancy to the vale of plain, prosaic, commonplace existence is not a pleasant experience. Nothing is more commonplace than the ambition to be great. If wishes were wings we should all be eagles or angels. Hitch your wagon to a star, if you will, but keep your wheels on the ground.

We cherish certain illusions regarding the church. We picture it as a scene of idyllic simplicity, purity and peace, of fellowship, brotherly love and spiritual power. There are ministers who spend their lives in the vain quest of the ideal church. There is none this side of the New Jerusalem. Jesus did not find it in the company of the twelve. Peter himself did not always exhibit the Pentecostal spirit. Paul did not find it as his Epistles abundantly attest. John did not find it, and the epistles to the seven churches give us a vivid picture of the church in every age. What errors of doctrine, what decay of morals, what discord and strife among those who should be brethren! A former parishioner of mine recently reminded me of a remark I once made in the pulpit, that when I entered the pastorate I thought I was called to be the leader of an army, but found myself head nurse in a hospital. The words were evidently spoken in a mood of disenchantment and disappointment, but there is more truth in them than there ought to be.

There are queer people in the church, timid souls like the man who said to me "I am afraid to study the Bible lest I should lose my faith"; self-confident

spirits like the man who said to me not long ago, "I know that Jesus said this, but I do not agree with him"; the self-righteous, like the woman who complained to me of her neighbors, and when I asked her if she could not forgive them as God forgave her, exclaimed, "I never treated the Lord as they treated me." Or you may have such an experience as befell me in my early ministry. I was preaching in a Methodist Church and at the close of the service the minister announced that "Brother Smith who is with us tonight will preach again next week." Whereupon an old brother in the front pew groaned out in painfully audible tones, "Lord help us." I was young and foolish and the prayer was timely, but disconcerting.

There are queer people in the church, and we may be a little queer ourselves. If you grow weary of the search for a perfect church, comfort yourselves with the question, suppose I should find it, what use would it have for me? For the ideal church would require the ideal minister, and the one is as rare as the other.

There are illusions that we cherish regarding the world. We fancy that the world is young and plastic. Year by year a great company of young men and women emerge from school and college, with essay in one hand and diploma in the other, bent upon turning the world upside down and reforming everything and everybody except themselves; but the world swings on its way unmoved and does not even know that they are at it. The world was very old when we were born and is very set in its ways. We grow impatient with the slow processes of nature and of grace, but God is never in a hurry, because he has eternity to work in. We

do well to remind ourselves often of the word of the poet, "too swift arrives as tardy as too slow."

We are often told that the world is hungry for the Gospel. It is true that there is in the hearts of men a restless craving which God alone can satisfy. But with most men it is an ignorant desire. The hungry body knows what it wants, often the hungry soul does not. Men seek satisfaction in money, in pleasure, in fame, in honor, in power. The soul hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and they give it a new car. The soul cries out passionately for God, for the living God, and they give it a trip to Europe. It is the task of the minister not to create, indeed, but to instruct and direct this craving of the soul and turn it to Him in whom alone satisfaction may be found. There are no bread lines in front of our churches. There are many men who preach the Gospel sincerely and earnestly who never draw a crowd. The world appears strangely indifferent to our warnings and counsels and appeals, and the churches are half empty while the streets are full.

These are some of the illusions regarding ourselves, the church and the world that experience soon dispels. Life is one long process of disillusionment. Neither ourselves nor the church nor the world are what we thought they were. When we are thus rudely awakened from the dreams of youth there are those who grow hard, bitter, jealous, cynical. A danger line in the ministry which may easily become the deadline is the approach to middle age. For this there are several reasons. The church no longer makes allowance for youth and inexperience. The minister has come to years of manhood and must prove himself a man. The blossoms of

hope and promise are beautiful in the springtime, but when summer comes they must give place to the fruits of wisdom and service. The physical energies begin to slacken, and the body responds less promptly and efficiently to the call of the spirit. As labor becomes a little harder, we are likely to do a little less and the habit grows. The material which we have accumulated during the years of preparation has been exhausted, perhaps repeated over and over again until it has become an oft told tale, wearisome alike to minister and people. The preacher is not a living voice but merely an echo of the past. The enthusiasm of youth has been shattered against the hard facts of life and the visions of youth no longer inspire and strengthen him.

How shall we meet these conditions and dangers that confront us at this time of life? All depends upon the habits we form in the Seminary and in the early years of our ministry. We form habits, then they form us. We are in danger of repeating the experience of Frankenstein, "The thing that we have fashioned may become our master, our tyrant." Habits are the fetters or the anchors of the soul. They are ruts or rails, ruts that hamper, confine and cripple our energies, or rails on which the wheels of life turn easily and quickly as they bear us on our way. Habits are the moulds in which the life is cast.

There are two habits that are essential if our ministry is to be not merely a profession by which we earn a living, but a divine calling: The habit of study and the habit of devotion. Our study must have a wide range, but the center and soul of it is the Word of God. The Bible is not an easy book. If it were the world would have outgrown it long ago. No other book is so difficult to

master because no other book has penetrated so deeply into the realm of mystery that hems us in on every side. It is mainly concerned with the two great mysteries of the universe: God Almighty and man made in the image of God. There is much, of course, which is plain and clear so that a child may learn the way of life; but there is also much that the mind of man has never fathomed, even the deep things of God. Hard and long and patient study is required if we would apprehend the fullness of grace and truth which is found in Christ Jesus.

A student once informed me with an air of self-complacency that he had reached the point of reading for inspiration and not for information. I took an early opportunity to remind the class that we cannot have fire without fuel, that it is well to gather the fuel before we start the fire, and that he who reads for inspiration only is likely to resemble the Halloween lantern, a candle shining dimly in an empty head.

The habit of devotion is the habit of fellowship with God. He is the companion, the friend of every day, shares with us every experience of our lives, has part in our sorrow and our joy. He puts his great heart beneath our burdens and griefs and helps us bear them. Whatever concerns us touches Him, and with unfailing wisdom and love He ministers to every need.

Our study of the Word should be both critical and devotional. Let us not separate mind and heart when we take up the Scripture. If the Bible is divine, the most searching investigation is simply a mode of approach to God. The word is barren if we do not find God. Let the morning hours be devoted to this holy office.

We hold fellowship with Him in

prayer. We talk together, we speak the same language, we speak to Him in prayer, He speaks to us in promise. If we thus abide in fellowship with God through prayer and study of the word, we shall not regret the lost illusions of our youth for they are replaced by realities far nobler and greater, as the heavens are higher than the earth. We may no longer cherish the hope of earthly fame and honor, but we are ambassadors of the King of Kings, representing the court of Heaven among the sons of men. We are the servants, the friends, the brothers of the Lord Jesus, and the simple "well done" of the Master is nobler and sweeter far than the loudest trump of earthly fame. We are prophets of the Spirit of God through whom he speaks testifying of Christ as Redeemer and Lord. Compared with these honors conferred upon us by God himself, what are the proudest titles of earth?

Our fancy may no longer picture a great cathedral as the scene of our labors and our triumphs, where great audiences wait upon our ministries. The church in which we serve may be small and plain, one of those homely structures that offend the eye of the artist, but strength and beauty are in his sanctuary, the strength and beauty of God, and the strength and beauty of his people, the strength of omnipotence and the beauty of holiness. This poor, uncomely building is the house of God, and gate of heaven. Here sinners are born anew; here the people of God are instructed, comforted, sanctified, strengthened for the service of the Kingdom.

The church may seem to fall far short of the glorious vision that floats before our imagination, but it is the salt of the earth, the light of the world. It is the pillar and ground of the truth, the

temple of God, the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. The Kingdom is far wider and greater than the church, but the church is the visible and earthly representative of the Kingdom. Very imperfect are the men and women that make up the church, just as imperfect as we are; but this is the way God thinks of them, this is the way the Lord Jesus regards them, for he loved the church and gave himself for it. It is crowned with the promises of God, and the Lord Jesus shall one day present it to himself, a glorious church, without spot or blemish, when the work of grace is complete, and the reign of glory is begun.

Learn to look upon the people to whom you minister with the eyes of the Master. With all their faults and failings, he loves them with an everlasting love. In them he lives again; through them he carries out his purpose of redemption. Ask nothing of them that you do not first ask of yourself, remembering that we all have one Master, even the Lord Jesus.

The world may disappoint us sorely. Men are hard, cold, indifferent; they are deaf to the most moving appeals, and seem insensible alike to hope and fear, yet this is the world that God so loved that He gave his only Son to redeem it, this is the world for which Christ died. These men and women so immersed in the cares and pleasures of life that they forget God, so laden with sins, are dear to the heart of God the Father. From them he is constantly recruiting the church. The sinner of today is the saint of tomorrow. There is no man sunk so deep in sin that Christ may not lay hold on him and lift him to the skies. Remember that this world is our field of service and

our training school for heaven. Christ prayed not that his disciples should be taken out of the world, for the disciple needs the discipline of the world, and the world needs the witness of the disciple. There are lessons that we may learn only here. There is service that we may render only here. Learn to look upon the world with the spirit of compassion that filled the heart of our Lord; the utmost measure of love to which we may attain is only a spark caught from the infinite and eternal flame of love that burns in the heart of God.

If we thus face the realities of life we shall be prophets, not priests. We do not recognize a distinct order of priests. We believe in the High Priesthood of Christ, and the universal priesthood of believers, who are appointed to offer the sacrifice of praise and good works. But there are priests among our ministers. The priests are men of the letter concerned with rites and forms and ceremonies. The minister who is a priest becomes an ecclesiastical mechanic, always tinkering with the machinery of the church, and content if the wheels run smoothly. The prophet is a man of the spirit declaring unto men the will of God for their salvation. Every man bears a priest and a prophet in his own heart and must determine which shall rule his life. We are constantly set face to face with the problems of the church. We spend much time and thought upon questions of organization and administration, and they have their importance, but they are wholly secondary. There is only one problem of primary concern in church life, and that is the problem of power. The poorest machine with adequate power is vastly more efficient than the most elaborate machinery where the power is wanting.

The secret of power is abiding in Christ. The secret of abiding is obedience. The power is there without limit for it is the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. But remember that the Spirit comes not to be our servant, but our master, not to work our will, but to work his will through us. We make our plans and then pray Him to help us carry them out. There is a better way; not plan and pray, but pray and plan. Ask the Holy Spirit to help us make our plans and if they are his, He will not withhold his aid.

It is an inspiring thought that we are not waging a losing battle or leading a forlorn hope. We are marching on to victory, to the certain and eternal triumph of the Kingdom of God. Christ is not on the way to another and darker Calvary. Once he bore the cross, now he wears the crown, a crown of all author-

ity in heaven and on earth. The world is his for He made it and redeemed it. Not one drop of the precious blood that flowed on Calvary was shed in vain, and the great majority of mankind shall be gathered in the Kingdom of God. The race that fell in Adam is restored in Christ. In the appointed time and way He shall come again to take possession of His own, and in the glory of that coming His faithful followers shall have a part. "With me ye have borne the cross," he shall say, "with me ye shall wear the crown. He that over-cometh shall sit with me on my throne." The heart of the promise is not *Shall sit on my throne*, but shall *sit with me*; for to be with Him and to be like Him is the highest conception that we may form of the life to come, and to Thee, blessed Lord Jesus shall be all the praise.

BOOK REVIEWS

What in the World Is the World Council of Churches?, by Ans J. Van Der Bent (including an interview with General Secretary Philip Potter). World Council of Churches, Geneva and New York, 1978. Pp. 86. \$3.95.

Most of the readers of this journal belong, through their churches who are members, to that great ecumenical fellowship which embraces the vast majority of non-Roman Christians, from Eastern Orthodox to Pentecostal, known as the World Council of Churches. Recently the World Council has been caught in a swirl of controversy, largely due to particular actions by one of its departments. Through the attacks of its enemies, its name is better known than ever before. But the average church member and even the average pastor is still in the main unaware of the full scope of what the Council is and does.

Here at last is a small book, clearly written and attractively illustrated, which fills this need for basic information. It contains a concise history of the modern ecumenical movement as it grew out of the Life and Work, the Faith and Order, and the world missionary movements of the past century. It describes the membership and the activities of the Council in the deepening of theological and spiritual fellowship between the churches, in exploring world mission and evangelism, in channeling interchurch aid to the needs of the world, in giving expression to the social responsibility of the churches for justice and human development, and in Christian education and the renewal of congregational life. There is also a brief chapter of reflection on the tasks that face the churches as they work together through the Council to bring a Christian witness to the world of tomorrow. Finally, there is a helpful list of appendices which show the membership, the organization, the staff and officers of the Council, and a selected bibliography for further reading.

The book also faces frankly the criticisms of the World Council of Churches, both informed and uninformed, which are abroad in the world today. It begins with an interview with the General Secretary, Philip Potter, which sets the tone of the whole. That tone is evangelical. Through Potter's words one

hears the basic ecumenical and missionary concern which formed the World Council of Churches in the first place: that Christians of the whole world may find the fullness of their fellowship in Jesus Christ and may bear a faithful witness to him throughout the world. This means that the Council is constantly wrestling with the problem of how an institution can also be a movement, and how a prophetic social witness can also be a ministry to the spiritual needs of the world. These problems are unsolved in the World Council, as they are unsolved in the churches. Christians need to listen to and work with each other in seeking answers to them. This is why the fellowship of the World Council of Churches exists.

This little book is short and clear and interesting enough to make good study material for any adult group in the congregation, and good reading for any church member.

CHARLES C. WEST

No Offense: Civil Religion and the Protestant Taste, by John Murray Cudihy. Seabury Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. xvi + 232. \$12.95.

This book presents a remarkable thesis, which comes out only in the final chapter and the conclusion: American Protestantism, rooted in the Puritan tradition of old New England and taking its model from Jesus and the early church, has imparted a "religion of civility" to the whole of American culture and politics which both institutionalizes and relativizes conflict between the ultimate claims of ideologies and religions. Christian humility takes the form of deliberate, even awkward, simplicity—an *aesthetica crucis* rather than an *aesthetica gloriae*—in art and life style. It demands a politics that does not pretend to realize community before the end-time but civilizes the conflict of interests and ideals into an imperfect but open process of living together. It relativizes finally the divisive, the elitist, claim of each religion—the Protestant evangelistic drive, the Catholic claim to be the one true church, and the Jewish sense of being a chosen people—into a respectful acceptance of each religion by the other in a plural society.

This is not, Cuddihy claims, a "civil religion" of the sort recently described by Robert Bellah, and earlier by Will Herberg and Ralph Henry Gabriel. It is not a set of beliefs common to the three major strands of American religion, woven together by a sense of nationhood. Rather, it is a style of human behavior which the American experience has come to require. It is an esthetic sense of what is appropriate in public life. There is a deep paradox in it, because the "no offense" this civility intends, gives definite offense to both traditional and radical cultures which are more communal and more dependent on their ultimates. Protestant sectarianism and Catholic conservatism sometimes seem stronger than the mainstream. Judaism wrestles with the special significance of the state of Israel for its faith. And from the left comes the continual shout that the civil consensus on which American institutions are built is a fraud engineered by the rich and the powerful to exploit and oppress the minorities and the poor.

Nevertheless Cuddihy sees a continual domestication of all these strands, however powerful they may seem to be, which is continuous with the message of Jesus himself. He also was offensive in his non-offense to the prevailing culture and power of his time. His fusion of divine power with the lowly and the commonplace, epitomized in the Last Supper, demanded both a political and an esthetic sacrifice of his followers, that characterized the church up to and beyond the time of Augustine. American civility is secular, but its roots are New Testament.

Cuddihy realizes the genuine dilemma in which this places any faith that claims to bear witness to an ultimate truth. The bulk of his book deals with the struggle of four major faith-claims of this sort: Protestant claims for salvation in Christ alone, Roman Catholic claims that there is no salvation outside the church, Jewish claims to be the chosen people of God, and Marxist claims for the victory of the proletariat in a revolutionary class struggle. Of these the chapter on Judaism is the most informative and fullest. The Roman Catholic chapter centers on John Courtney Murray's theological affirmation of American democracy rooted in the natural law for secular purposes which do not affect the church's ultimate religious claim. The chapter on Protestantism deals exclusively with Reinhold Niebuhr's developing relations with the Jew-

ish community and its effect on his understanding of the universal truth claim of Christian faith. There is finally a study of the way Marxist ideas have been absorbed and relativized in American sociology.

Here lies the basic problem of the book. As a description of American behavior it has value. As a theological statement of the relation between faith, politics and culture, it is suggestive but needs much qualification. As a description of the theology of culture, at least in Protestantism and Catholicism, it trivializes what is going on. The statement of Murray's and of Niebuhr's ideas is clear and accurate as far as it goes. Neglected however is the fact that the Christian church in all its communions continues to wrestle, both in theology and practice, with the question of the form of its life and teaching which will be a faithful witness to Christ's claim over the whole of American life, and which will therefore be truly missionary. The problem is not settled by Catholic natural law doctrine or by Protestant self-criticism and repentance. Nor is there, as Cuddihy himself recognizes in a kind of undercurrent to his thought, a simple continuity between New Testament humility and American civility. There are too many elements of collective self-interest in the latter which need the prophetic judgment of the Gospel, which seems by its very nature uncivil. One should read *No Offense* as a stimulating *aperçu* of Protestant spirituality in the American scene by a Catholic and a sociologist. As such it may help us each to reflect more deeply about a proper theology of American culture.

CHARLES C. WEST

The Center of Christianity, by John Hick. Harper & Row, San Francisco, CA, 1978. Pp. 128. \$6.95.

During the last twenty years John Hick has published an impressive number of provocative and imaginative essays on topics in theology and the philosophy of religion. Although he holds the chair of H. G. Wood Professor of Theology at the University of Birmingham in England, Hick clearly is more a philosopher of religion than a systematic or dogmatic theologian. As a philosopher he has examined some of the basic claims of the Christian tradition and has subjected them to rational inquiry. In so doing he has raised a

host of important questions for the Christian church and its theologians. *The Center of Christianity* is the second edition of *Christianity at the Centre* (first published in 1968). It is both an introduction to what Hick considers basic issues confronting Christian faith today and a summary of the positions Hick has been arguing during the past twenty years. For the most part it is free from technical theological jargon and unnecessary footnotes, and probably could be used in an introductory college religion course or by churches for adult education.

Hick's argument is that Jesus of Nazareth stands at the center of Christianity and that "the primary and central fact" in Christian faith "remains the impact of Jesus of Nazareth upon mankind." What we see in the figure of Jesus, Hick argues, is a man who was "marvellously open to God, living consciously in the divine presence and responsively to the divine purpose." Jesus possessed an "intense God-consciousness" which manifested itself in his self-giving love and his treatment of other people as children of God. In the life and teaching of Jesus we encounter that divine reality who is self-giving love itself, a love that carries with it a moral demand that we "strive towards the human perfection for which he has made us." Faith in the God who encounters us in Jesus is not simply a matter of assenting to certain propositions nor is it some form of bet or religious wager. Faith, as Hick describes it, is an interpretative capacity which enables us to "experience life as divinely created and ourselves as living in the unseen presence of God."

In the last two chapters Hick discusses the practical difference faith makes, some of the intellectual questions that have been raised against Christian faith, and what Christian faith has to say about non-Christians and life after death. Most of these themes have been developed in greater detail in Hick's other books, especially in *Evil and the God of Love*, *God and the Universe of Faiths*, and *Death and Eternal Life*.

Those who respond in faith to the self-giving love revealed in Jesus of Nazareth are called not to a life characterized by divine commands or moral rules, but to a disposition and a posture in the world that reflects the reality of this love. Having experienced this self-giving love and its demands Christians should respond by living in openness to others with an "other-regarding outlook."

Furthermore a proper understanding of self-giving love and sensitivity to the plurality of religious faiths in the world means that the traditional position that salvation is only for Christians is no longer tenable. Christians should see God at the center of things and interpret the eschatological images of other world religions "not as definitive doctrines but as pointers to an unknown reality which lies beyond our vision," pointers which converge and direct us along a common path.

In response to the challenge posed by the reality of evil, Hick argues that the majority position in the Christian tradition, the Augustinian position, has serious logical, historical, and moral problems. In its place he argues for "a viable alternative," a theodicy derived from the Irenaean tradition which does not minimize the reality of evil but which depicts the world as a place for soul-making. In Hick's theodicy Jesus' death was the supreme evil because it represents "the rejection of the highest possibility of our own human nature." His position on theodicy leads Hick to develop two other themes: eschatological verification and his interpretation of "eternal life." If the world is a place for soul-making then death presents an obvious problem, since there seem to be few people who reach perfection before they die. Hick's response is that evil is by no means good, but that it serves a good end and must be interpreted from this eschatological perspective. Death itself is not evil but resembles sleep. It is the termination of one stage of our immortal existence which leads finally "to a total purification from evil desire and a final entry into the conscious presence of infinite Goodness."

Hick does not respond in this book to the critical questions that have been raised about his arguments. For example, Hick's belief that we have access to Jesus' consciousness is difficult to defend in light of the discoveries of modern biblical scholarship. Repeatedly Hick speaks of "Jesus' consciousness of God" and he seems to think we know a great deal about Jesus' thoughts and self-understanding. At some points (for example, his discussion of the christological titles on pp. 27-30), Hick seems to be aware of the contributions of biblical scholarship, but elsewhere he uses scripture and speaks of Jesus as though there were no critical problems. A case in point is Hick's discussion of the church. He suggests that Jesus founded the church, that he created "a community, a living corporate entity, a

body of people of which the original nucleus was the group of disciples" (p. 67). One would like to see what evidence Hick has that Jesus understood his apostles to be "a living corporate entity."

Equally disturbing is Hick's theodicy and his interpretation of life after death. If the world is a place for soul-making, if Jesus represents a human possibility ("what we may all ultimately become"), and if death is but the boundary between this world and the next stage in a series of "lives to come," one cannot help wondering what has become of the doctrine of justification and the Christian understanding of grace. The image of the Kingdom of God, as Hick interprets it, becomes more a curse than a blessing, more a burden than a source of hope. Human beings labor in this life and in the lives that await them on the other side of death under the impossible demand of "gradual growth of the human self towards its perfection." It is difficult to know what grace and the forgiveness of sins mean in Hick's scheme of things.

The ambiguity concerning justification is indicative of a larger problem in Hick's book. Although he argues that Jesus of Nazareth is the starting-point and the center of Christianity (p. 15), Hick does not always consistently hold to that methodological position. Often it seems that the theological center gives way to Hick's speculative, philosophical interests. It is far from clear how one moves from Jesus of Nazareth to what Hick calls the "likelihood" of a series of lives in other worlds.

There is much in this book and in the rest of Hick's work that is worth reading and thinking about. His arguments are creative and original and his insistence that Christian faith be subjected to rational investigation is admirable. Although he occasionally overstates his case, his arguments against the traditional interpretations of incarnation, theodicy, and the status of non-Christians should be carefully considered. They deserve a thoughtful response.

GEORGE W. STROUP

Søren Kierkegaard's Journals and Papers, ed. and trans. by Howard V. Hong & Edna H. Hong (assisted by Gregor Malantschuk). Indiana University

Press, Bloomington, Ind., 1967-78. Seven volumes. \$145.00 complete set; individual volumes from \$20.00 to \$35.00.

People who are not Kierkegaard scholars ought to know about this edition of Kierkegaard's *Journals*, which though massive, is still only a selection from the twenty-volume Danish original (*Papirer*, eds. Heiberg-Kuhr-Torsting) plus the two volumes of letters and documents (ed. Thulstrup) and hitherto unpublished material now appearing as supplements to the *Papirer* (also ed. Thulstrup). It would appear at first sight that only the professional specialist ought to be concerned, since Kierkegaard's twenty-one books should be more than enough to keep one busy without the need to trouble oneself with other material. That is certainly the way I felt when I, as an ordinary teacher of Kierkegaard and sundry other people, first opened these volumes. Happily, I soon found them immensely rewarding in two ways.

First, the editors have rearranged the material and grouped it under various topics, so that the material in the first four volumes does not stand in the order in which it was composed. Here is a sample of the organizing topics: freedom, inwardness, ethics, communication. These subject headings are arranged alphabetically, with a table of contents in each volume. Thus a person who has an interest in a particular idea or theme in Kierkegaard can quickly locate many relevant passages from his journals on that item. Since the material under each subject heading is arranged as far as possible chronologically, one can detect whatever changes in emphasis or direction there may be on a theme. The number of topics is very extensive; for example, there are fifty-three in the first volume and forty-three in the second. Unlike the first four volumes just described, the fifth and sixth consist of autobiographical material and letters arranged chronologically. But the seventh volume, which is an index to the entire set, makes it easy to find what one wants in them as well.

The second happy discovery was the great help I received with some things that have puzzled me in Kierkegaard's books. For example, Kierkegaard's own position vis-à-vis the reform of the church was greatly illumined for me by just a couple of pages found by consulting the index—material

which without this set I would never have known about. I was so excited when I found it that I said to myself, "If for nothing else, this would be worth the price of the volume."

There are many aids to the reader besides those mentioned so far. Each volume has a table which correlates its entries with the Danish *Papirer*, plus a composite table to the set in Volume Seven. So a person can determine the chronological sequence by these references. Each volume also gives a six-page chronology of Kierkegaard's life, with the publication of each work. Volume One has a bibliography of Kierkegaard's works in English translation, with secondary sources in English. In addition, the first four volumes have extensive notes and commentary (a total of some four hundred pages) which give a brief account of the basic concepts which serve as the organizing rubrics of the volumes. The commentary is supplied by G. M. Malantschuk, Kierkegaard Research Fellow, University of Copenhagen; the editors supply bibliographic aids under each of the rubrics. The fifth and sixth volumes contain notes only.

The editors explain that they first made their own selection (but not the basis of it) and then checked their choice against the actual use made of the *Papirer* by various Kierkegaard scholars in several countries, to confirm their own judgment and to expand the selection. They also checked their choices with other editions of selections in German, French, Italian, and Danish.

A few blemishes in this magnificent achievement were detected. I found no reason why item 4151 is listed under "Psychology" in the Index (and the reference to the *Papirer* is given as IX A 353 in the text, but IX A 354 in the Index). Item 4161, also listed in the Index under "Psychology," has only a tangential connection to psychology. But to so quibble is indeed to quibble; for those of us who have hitherto had access to the *Journals* primarily only through the one-volume selection by Dru, this splendid edition is indeed an eye-opener.

DIODENES ALLEN

Reaping the Whirlwind: A Christian Interpretation of History, by Langdon Gilkey. The Seabury Press, New York, N.Y., 1976. Pp. 446. \$17.50.

In this book Langdon Gilkey makes an important contribution to the continuing discussion of eschatology and history, especially as it relates to the political dimensions of Christian faith and the possibilities of hope within history. Quite likely the book will be spurned by some liberation theologians as one more example of western ideology, but that will be unfortunate. Gilkey takes seriously the claims of liberation theology, but his appreciation is tempered by the conviction that the theological giants of the past generation, particularly Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, must be reckoned with in any attempt to formulate a theological interpretation of history. In the broadest sense, therefore, the book is Gilkey's attempt to forge a synthesis between the tradition of Niebuhr and Tillich, on the one hand, and that of the more recent eschatological-liberation theologies, on the other. It is a risky enterprise, but I think it comes off rather well.

The fundamental problem with the eschatological theologies, according to Gilkey, lies in their inability to speak intelligibly of God's relation to the present. Although Gilkey's critique is overdone, the basic point is well taken. A God who creates "from the future" has as much responsibility for *this* present as any future present. The eschatological hope, therefore, for a future liberating action of God is credible only if we are able to speak meaningfully of God's action in the present. To use more traditional language, eschatology (God's work in and from the future) presupposes providence (God's purposive work in the world at large).

The attempt to articulate a doctrine of providence begins with an ontology of history, which Gilkey, like Tillich, believes is both possible and necessary. However, Tillich's categories of self and world are too static for this task, and Gilkey opts for the more dynamic Whiteheadian categories of freedom and destiny. Thus history "moves" and is experienced in this interplay of freedom and destiny, this bringing together of the historical given with the actualization of new possibilities. In a move very similar to that made in his earlier *Naming the Whirlwind*, Gilkey argues that our experience of history, especially as manifest in political action and political judgment, is inexplicable apart from some principle of ultimacy. Hence it appears that the horizon of history "as we

experience it in communal life is not as 'secular' as our age . . . has supposed." The implication is that an adequate interpretation of history must be a theological interpretation.

Under the conditions of actual existence, however, one is aware also of estrangement, the warping of freedom and destiny and their transformation into sin and fate, respectively. It is here that the relevance of Christianity appears, for if one is to continue to affirm that history does have meaning, then natural theology must be superseded by kerygmatic theology, i.e., the ontology of history must give way to the symbols of judgment and redemption. This move is not to be interpreted as part of one long argument, and Gilkey's "Interlude on Method" in chapters 5 and 6 symbolizes and gives emphasis to the methodological shift between the phenomenology of history in Part I and the Christian interpretation of history in Part III.

In Part III, after analyzing the view of providence in Augustine and Calvin and exploring the elements of the modern historical consciousness, Gilkey offers a critique of the understanding of providence in nineteenth century liberal theology, twentieth century Krisis theology, and the recent eschatological theologies. From this critique evolve certain principles that are woven into the constructive argument of chapters 10-12. The basic thesis is that each of these theological movements oversimplified its interpretation of history by allowing one symbol of God's activity in history to eclipse the others: Liberalism focused too exclusively on providence, Krisis theology on Christology (Incarnation), and eschatological theology on eschatology. Gilkey argues that a theological interpretation of history that does justice to the way history is actually experienced must maintain a balance between these three primary symbols.

The symbol of providence is explicated by Gilkey in terms of Whiteheadian metaphysics, slightly modified. Tillich-like, he suggests that God be understood, not as one cause among others, which would thereby abrogate the naturalistic principle of causation or explanation, but as the ground of existence, the necessary condition of freedom and destiny. God is both the principle of continuity in historical process, the one who unifies the modes of time and carries "forward the total destiny of the past into the present where it is actualized by freedom," and the ground of possibility and therefore of human freedom.

The interpretation of providence in terms of ontological structures alone, however, cannot deal with the reality of sin which distorts that structure. Thus providence is also experienced, as in the Old Testament prophetic model, in the cycle of judgment and renewal, the destruction of warped institutions and the actualization of new forms of life. Hence the need for political praxis to criticize and transform the socio-economic order.

Following Niebuhr, however, Gilkey insists that the possibility of sin is not eradicated by the cycle of judgment and renewal. Political theology is both possible and necessary, but it cannot become the whole of the theological task. Since freedom is the ground of both creativity and sin, ambiguity is a permanent feature of historical experience, persisting into every new structure. Hence the symbol of providence alone cannot apprehend the meaning of history, but must give way to the symbols of Christology and Incarnation. It is in Jesus as the Christ, the New Being who makes possible a new form of life, that the problem of historical ambiguity is finally overcome. The divine participation in the estranged conditions of existence is the beginning of redemption; and because the "inner and outer" are *one* history, the acceptance, forgiveness and healing of the unrighteous cannot be stripped of its historical and political implications. Christology also serves as the link between providence and eschatology, because the kingdom of God as proclaimed by Jesus and manifest in him is the possibility and norm of history, the goal of providence. As the intention of God revealed to us in time, the kingdom is both a lure that summons us to actualize new possibilities within history and the norm by which our historical achievements are to be judged.

The final chapter sketches the implications of all this for a doctrine of God. What is most striking here is the notion of a *self-limiting* God who creates "a free contingent being that is not God or a part of God and whose actions are not God's actions." This has profound implications for a political theology, for it enables one to speak in a radical sense of human being as *cooperator Dei*.

This book is pitched toward university academic theology, but the appeal of Gilkey's thesis is surely much broader. I suspect, for example, that the book will be much appreciated by all those who recognize the validity of liberation theology while holding fast to

the tradition of Niebuhr and Tillich. What emerges in these pages is a creative reworking of Niebuhr and Tillich that heightens the elements of temporality and sociality in human existence and offers a very original interpretation of providence. In addition, Gilkey is an articulate interpreter of both historical and contemporary thought, and the short descriptive sections on Bloch, Whitehead, Augustine, and others are lucid and helpful. The book deserves the serious attention of academic circles, but it also has much to contribute to any careful reader interested in theology and politics.

JOHN C. SHELLEY, JR.

Franklin College

The Book of Daniel (The Anchor Bible), by Louis F. Hartman & Alexander A. DiLella. Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y., 1978. Pp. xiv + 346. \$12.00.

As indicated on the title page, this volume of The Anchor Bible series has been prepared by two distinguished biblical scholars from the faculty of the Catholic University of America. Father Hartman, professor of Semitic languages, who was asked to be the sole author of the work, completed before his untimely death in 1970, the translation, text-critical apparatus, and explanatory notes of all twelve chapters of Daniel as well as the commentary on chapters 1-9. After his death Alexander A. DiLella, professor of Old Testament, completed the volume, writing the commentary on chapters 10-12 as well as the whole Introduction.

The book is divided into two main sections: the Introduction (pp. 3-110) and Commentary (pp. 127-315), with a Selected Bibliography (pp. 111-124) and a short Appendix which includes the translation of Susanna, Bel, and the Dragon.

The Book of Daniel is one of the most fascinating portions of Scripture, and for several reasons, one of the most difficult. It is divided into two roughly equal parts: Chapters 1-6 are six midrashic or edifying stories, narrated in the third person, and Chapters 7-12 contain four apocalypses in the first person form. The simple and easily remembered tales of the first part are told *about* Daniel, with no indication that he wrote them him-

self since he is referred to in the third person. The second part describes four visions seen by Daniel and apparently written by him, since the first person is used in the account. These two disparate sections, composed of a number of independent elements, as well as substantial glosses or interpretations throughout the book, point to a multiple authorship and a long, complicated history of composition covering the period from about the third century B.C. to 140 B.C. (pp. 11-14).

Another feature that makes the canonical Book of Daniel different from every other book of the Bible is its peculiar bilingual character: Hebrew 1:1-2:4a and 8-12, and Aramaic 2:4b-7:28. The authors of this commentary hold to the view that all twelve chapters had originally been composed in Aramaic, but in order to ensure canonical recognition the beginning (1:1-2:14a) and the end (8-12) were translated into Hebrew. This theory of an Aramaic original for the book leads to a better understanding of the Hebrew text which in places failed to render accurately the presumed Aramaic of the Ur-text (pp. 14-15).

Besides the material just discussed, the Introduction contains a wealth of information on all matters of importance regarding the content, sources, versions and practical value of the Book of Daniel. Some of the subjects dealt with are: "Place in the Canon" (25f.), "The Hasidic Origin of the Book" (43f.), "The Romance of the Successful Courtier" (55f.), "The Greek Form of Daniel" (76f.), etc.

In the chapter on "The Historical Background" (pp. 28-42), the author indicates how modern scholarship has thrown new light on the origin and meaning of the "historical framework" of the four successive world kingdoms in Dan. 2 and 7. To the bibliography cited in the discussion may be added S. K. Eddy, *The King is Dead: Studies in the Near Eastern Resistance to Hellenism*, 1961.

The Commentary section of the volume (pp. 127-315) consists of the translation of the text, notes and more full comments, both general and detailed. The translation is quite free in many places. A few spot passages may be noted to show the character of the exegetical work and comments. The date of 606 B.C. ("in the third year . . . of Jehoiakim," Dan. 1:1) is of course spurious and may have

been inferred from such passages as 2 Kings 24:1 and 2 Chron. 36:5-7.

The search for the mysterious figure of Darius the Mede still goes on without any success (Dan. 6:1, 9:1). He is a completely fictitious character who emerges as the result of confusion and hazy memories in the minds of the authors of Daniel (pp. 36, 191).

The "one like a son of man" (RSV) becomes "one in human likeness" in The Anchor Bible translation. "Just as the four horrifying and vile beasts" (7:3-7) are not real animals but symbols, pure and simple, of the pagan kingdoms of the Babylonians, Medes, Persians and Greeks, so too the "one in human likeness" is not a real individual, celestial or terrestrial, but is only a symbol of "the holy ones of the Most High," a title given, as we shall see, to the faithful Jews—men, women, and children—who courageously withstood the persecution of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. Hence, there seems to be no mystery as to the meaning and background of the "one in human likeness" (p. 87).

The historical framework of the four kingdoms (chaps. 2 & 7) is followed by a fifth kingdom, set up by God and eternal in duration (2:44-5; 7:27). In 12:1-3 the apocalypticist sees the terrible persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes followed by a resurrection of faithful Jews to eternal life in God's eternal kingdom. Only God can overcome the power of evil embodied in Antiochus Epiphanes and vindicate the faith of the holy ones.

This commentary on Daniel, composed with the biblical scholar and interested lay reader in mind, is a useful addition to the literature on this enigmatic book. The problems are clearly presented and discussed in the light of the most recent research on these matters. Above all, the profound religious and human dimensions of the Daniel stories, with their emphasis on hope and deliverance for all men and women of faith who must suffer for their beliefs, are never lost sight of in the exposition of the text.

CHARLES T. FRITSCH

Theology as Narration: A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, by George A. F. Knight. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1976. Pp. 209. \$5.95 (paper).

This is a book whose subtitle is indispensable, for it is not a systematic treatment of "theology as narration" but a rather straightforward commentary on Exodus. The title comes from the author's laudable attempt to treat the text of Exodus as a wholistic narrative, rather than a jumbled mixture of various literary sources and traditions. Knight asserts that "some *one* person . . . wrote Exodus, in the same sense that some *one* person wrote Matthew's Gospel" (xi). This person he identifies as "Ex," a redactor who was at work c. 515 B.C. under the influence of the newly constructed second Temple and the great festival of Passover (Ezr 6.19). It was Ex who assembled the various sources (J, E, D, P) into final narrative form.

One can only applaud the attempt to deal with the final shape of the text. Equally appealing are Knight's frequent efforts to support a Jewish-Christian dialogue; his emphasis on the primary importance of grace with respect to "law" in Exodus, and how this involves political liberation; his honest confrontation with hard questions (at Passover, 12.29-32—"does God kill babies?"—p. 92). Despite a clear conservative strain throughout the book, Knight castigates "fundamentalist literalism and biblicism" (54). At numerous points there is an overt application of the text to the situation of contemporary ministry.

Despite these positive features, the commentary as a whole suffers from a number of major interpretive problems, only a few of which can be mentioned here. Knight's assertions about the final redactor "Ex" are not substantiated by any sustained argument. Moreover, except for frequent references to the "story" or "picture" form of theological expression in the text, there is no treatment of the hermeneutical problems involved in speaking of a final "author." While Knight often refers to the different sources in a given pericope, he refuses to deal with form-or tradition-criticism (cf. p. x), a decision which ignores the depth perception which such disciplines provide (e.g. the ways in which the forms and traditions of the prophetic "office" pervade Exodus 3-4). One must also question the extent to which Knight has allowed his judgment about the historical situation of "Ex" to color his interpretation of the text. Thus not only the situation of the second Temple is involved,

but there are repeated references to Second Isaiah as a major influence on the final text of Exodus (e.g. pp. xi, 1-2, 36-37).

There are some very annoying attempts to treat the text as a straight historical document. Some of these discussions involve the author in unnecessary and sometimes almost humorous irrelevancies (is Moses' age at death really important [50], and do we need to bemoan the death of innocent fish in the plague of blood [59]?). Others lead to more serious theological problems, some of which are outright distortions of the text to suit the author's apparent bias: "Pharaoh's order to choke the male babies at birth seems reasonable to natural man, especially today when millions in the West insist on abortion on demand" (6; cf. 140 on Exod 21.22).

The author's appeal for Jewish-Christian dialogue is no doubt sincere ("Just as there is only one Covenant, so there is also only one Israel of God" [46], cf. xii-xiv, 26-27, 159). Nevertheless, one wonders how a Jew would read this commentary, with all of its importation of New Testament themes (especially the God who "empties himself" and suffers). Even for Christians, Knight often seems to overstate his case: "Thus there is no discontinuity between the God of the exodus and the God of the NT whom we meet in the bloody figure of Christus Victor . . ." (106).

Other exegetical and theological problems abound. Knight frequently appeals to a distinction between religion and revelation (only the latter, of course, is Biblical) which is extremely simplistic: "Israel does not have a religion. Religion is that which man [*sic*, and frequently] thinks about the divine" (112). Thus the religions of Israel's ancient neighbors, and of the contemporary world, are dismissed as human fabrications. The narrative of Exodus, on the other hand, is said to reveal "the mind of God" (a ubiquitous and curious phrase). Another problem is presented by Knight's interpretation of the covenant, where there is no reference to the famous Hittite treaties, and Israel's covenant with Yahweh is construed by way of Hosea's theme of the marriage contract (e.g. 156), a construal which obscures the political and juridical aspects of the covenant. Similar difficulties surround the author's attempt to make the message of "Ex" one of universal application, often sounding more like Paul than P: "Thus Passover is God's gift, through

Israel, to all men, male and female [*sic*!], Jew and Gentile, bond and free alike" (95).

In summary, despite the noble intentions of this commentary, it cannot be recommended very highly, primarily because of its serious exegetical and theological problems.

THOMAS W. MANN

Jonathan Loved David: Homosexuality in Biblical Times, by Tom Horner. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1978. Pp. 163. \$5.95.

Tom Horner's *Jonathan Loved David* is a book about homosexuality in biblical times. The book's goal is to prove that Scripture, so far from condemning homosexuality, can be shown to treat it as an accepted practice. Thus Dr. Horner thrusts himself into the midst of a major church issue. This book is intended for interested laity and clergy. While the reader is not expected to be expert in Biblical Criticism, the book is rooted in this science. Unfortunately the book frequently uproots itself by going too far in appealing to the popular reader, e.g., in its frequent use of the King James' Version. In his attempt to appeal to a popular audience Horner, as shall be shown below, frequently neglects to treat scholarly arguments against his interpretation.

Much of Horner's argument is flawed. One example must suffice to illustrate his failure to take advantage of accepted scholarship. This example is taken from the premier place to begin a critique of Horner, his chapter "David and Jonathan." Having satisfied himself that tenth century B.C. Israel was characterized by a "society that for two hundred years had lived in the shadow of the Philistine culture, which accepted homosexuality; . . ." (p. 27f), Horner states "we have every reason to believe that a homosexual relationship existed" (p. 28) between David and Jonathan! Horner's arguments rest on his interpretation of 1 Sam 18:1-4; 20:30f; 2 Sam 1:19-27, an interpretation lacking any discussion of the word love, *'āhēb*. Surely it is dangerous to assume that the meaning of the term *'āhēb* is obviously sexual. M. Fishbane in "The Treaty Background of Amos 1:11 and Related Matters." *JBL* 89/3 (1970), pp. 314f. cites 1 Sam 18:1-4 as a biblical parallel to the Vassal-Treaties of

Esarhaddon. He finds 'āhēb to be a covenantal term. This use also occurs in 1 Kg 5:15 (EVV 5:1). Jonathan's calling David his brother, 1 Sam 20:9, is paralleled in 1 Kg 9:13. Surely Horner would not want to suggest that David and Solomon were so promiscuous as to have shared a homosexual liaison with Hiram! It is much more likely that in both 1 Sam and 1 Kg we encounter covenantal language. Here 'āhēb is a technical term of obvious meaning to the participants just as, for instance, intercourse means conversation in some contexts and in others a town in Pennsylvania. To assume that this is a tale of homosexual love overlooks the more obvious meaning, Jonathan and David participated in a political covenant.

Dr. Horner is on safer ground in his chapters entitled "The 'Dogs' or homosexual 'Holy Men'" and "All These Abominations." He notes that all forms of cult prostitution were anathema to Yahwism. Horner goes on to assert that in condemning homosexuality the Israelite was actually censuring male cult prostitution. The question Horner leaves unanswered is whether or not the Yahwist either could have or cared to differentiate between the homosexuality of a cult prostitute and the homosexuality of a Yahwist? Or did the ancient theologians see the two as identical? To jump several centuries Paul's argument in Rom 1:22-27 could be interpreted this way.

The crux of Horner's argument is found in his concluding chapter, "Jesus and Sexuality." He states:

... when the leader and, probably, most members of his group were single, it is only natural that some observers of primitive Christianity are going to suspect that homosexuality could have been a factor in this little group to a greater or lesser degree. (p. 117)

Horner's style is to present an extreme position, then refute it or propose one which in light of the first seems less extreme. He finally concludes:

What is conclusive is that it is impossible to conceive of Jesus as displaying hostility toward anyone because of his or her sexual preferences—especially the kind of hostility that some of his followers have displayed toward others throughout history on account of their homosexuality. (p. 121)

How does David's relationship to Jonathan

or Ruth's to Naomi enhance our apprehension of Horner's conclusion? Especially in light of the poor scholarship involved in the chapter on David and Jonathan it would seem that Horner's argument would proceed more clearly without any appeal to these O.T. figures. Yet if one removes the treatment of David and Jonathan, as well as his even more problematical treatment of Ruth and Naomi, then Horner is incapable of eliciting any clear positive example of homosexuality from the Bible. The most he can say is that Jesus, had he been confronted with the issue, would not have treated homosexuality any differently than he handled adultery. But then are we not left wondering if Jesus would have said "Go and sin no more!?"

Dr. Horner has totally neglected what may be the most important question in any practical study of Biblical Ethics. He has not discussed the authority of the Bible. Why should we care about the homosexual practices of ancient peoples? How is the Bible normative for us? Does he believe that his arguments facilitate dialogue between peoples? This book might have facilitated dialogues had Horner's scholarship been more careful, but, alas, it was not. His grandstanding and unconvincing argument on David and Jonathan obfuscates his purpose. Biblical Theology is, of course, of vital importance to the church. But this book can only be of service if it is paired with a discussion of Gen 1:26f; 2:18, 23f. How does the call to heterosexuality impact the affirmation of homosexuality? If this question was answered then a service would really have been provided.

PETER R. POWELL, JR.

Handbook of Biblical Criticism, by Richard N. Soulen. John Knox Press, Atlanta, Ga., 1976. Pp. 200. \$7.95 (paper).

Richard N. Soulen is associate professor of New Testament at the School of Theology, Virginia Union University, Richmond. His *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* arises out of a sensitivity to the pedagogical dilemma presented by the fact that classroom lectures and introductory texts intended for the beginning student and non-specialist in the critical study of the Bible all too often presuppose a knowl-

edge of the field few possess. As an initial effort to address this pedagogical need, Soulen's *Handbook* provides the reader with more than 500 technical terms, phrases and names basic to Biblical criticism.

The entries in *Handbook* follow six categories: Methodologies; Technical Terms and Phrases; Research Tools and Texts; Names; Theological Terms; and Abbreviations. Arranged alphabetically with complete cross-references, *Handbook's* entries range from such basics as "Concordance" and "Lectonary" to more exotic terminology such as *Epinicion* and *Peripeteia*. Users of *Handbook* will appreciate Soulen's concise treatment of those ubiquitous terms and phrases taken from German Biblical scholarship, such as *Gattung*, *Sitz im Leben*, and *Überlieferungsgeschichte*, which frequently prove so troublesome to the novice. The 60-plus brief biographical sketches of key figures in the history of Biblical research, from Albright and Alt to Wellhausen and Wrede, are as interesting as they are informative.

Professor Soulen carefully notes that the definitions contained in *Handbook* "are offered as working definitions, not more" (p. 8). These "working definitions" are designed to serve as an "abbreviated introduction to the methodologies of Biblical criticism" as well as to facilitate the student's "use of established tools of scholarly research" (p. 7). Although *Handbook* is a non-technical reference work, it is not devoid of detail. Soulen's inclusion of a complete listing of the Nag Hammadi Codices currently published by E. J. Brill (Leiden) and his useful listing of the four systems of Hebrew transliteration currently in use in Great Britain, Germany and America, are just two examples of some of the particulars one ordinarily does not find in a non-technical handbook.

In these days of continually escalating book costs, Professor Soulen's *Handbook of Biblical Criticism* offers a wealth of information under one cover at a welcome price. It is truly a valuable *vade mecum* for the non-specialist, whether busy pastor, student, or layperson.

WILLIAM A. HARTFELDER, JR.

Hebrew Union College
Cincinnati, O.

Charles F. Kraft. Abingdon Press,
Nashville, Tenn., 1976. Pp. 208. \$7.95.

In the Introduction to *Biblical Backgrounds of the Middle East Conflict*, Dr. Georgia Harkness states that an eschatological interpretation of Scripture *vis-à-vis* the modern Middle East is not the intention of the book. Rather, she states that the focus of this survey is "the political and social history of the people, and hence the bearing of this past upon the conditions of the present" (p. 13). However, that the actual focus of the book does indeed extend beyond a socio-political examination of the past's impact upon the present is revealed both by the publisher and by Dr. Harkness herself!

The Publisher's Foreword states that Dr. Harkness "set out to write this book to help others understand the past as a 'prologue' to the present and *the future*" (p. 5 italics mine). Similarly, elsewhere in the Introduction, Dr. Harkness writes, that the book "deals mainly with the past, which should help us to understand the present, and to judge with some measure of probability as to *the future*" (p. 11 italics mine). This apparent confusion of purpose is reflected throughout the presentation of the ensuing survey material.

Any criticism of *Biblical Backgrounds* must be tempered by the unfortunate fact that Dr. Harkness was taken ill and that her subsequent death cut short the completion of her manuscript. Dr. Harkness' survey was halted at the point of her abridgement of the biblical account of the United Monarchy under David and Solomon. As a result, we do not have a complete picture of how she would have presented the crucial application of the book, i.e. the bearing of the past as formative influence upon the dynamics of the present. Dr. Charles F. Kraft, Frederick Carl Eiselen Professor of Old Testament Interpretation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary and one-time colleague of Dr. Harkness, completed the manuscript by contributing the final four chapters of this ten chapter book.

The fatal flaw of this effort by Drs. Harkness and Kraft lies in its methodology. The authors err in their assumption that a mere recitation of historical excerpts juxtaposed to selected, alleged parallels within the present is sufficient to establish an organic cause and effect relationship between the two. For ex-

Biblical Backgrounds of the Middle East Conflict, by Georgia Harkness &

ample, following her five page summation of the Patriarchal Narratives in Genesis, Dr. Harkness tells the reader that "in these stories from the tenth century B.C. and somewhat later we see indications of kinship [between Arab and Jew], and also of clashes, foreshadowing what was centuries later to become the Arab-Israeli conflict" (pp. 31-32). Likewise, Dr. Kraft directs the reader to compare the efforts of the Zealots and the Sicarii to oust the Romans in the years following the death of Herod Agrippa I (44 C.E.) with "the terrorist activities of Jewish underground groups during the last days of the British mandate before 1948" (pp. 136-137; p. 142, fn. 16). The result of such unqualified comparisons is an oversimplification of the complex conditions extant during these periods of historical development in the Middle East.

Biblical Backgrounds also suffers from the brevity of its "social and political" survey. The 31 pages of Chapter 8 recount Jewish experiences under the Persians, Greeks, Maccabees and Romans. Chapter 9, entitled "Jerusalem Through Three Millennia," relates the city's three thousand year history and its significance for Judaism, Christianity and Islam within a scant 25 pages of historical highlights. The consequences of such brevity are most severe in the final chapter entitled "The Past Within the Present." The chapter's 39 pages lightly touch upon the end of Turkish rule in Palestine, the British Mandate, the birth of Zionism, the birth of the State of Israel and the four Arab-Israeli wars. The tragedy of the Jewish Holocaust under Nazism as it affects the Middle East is inexcusably oversimplified to three points:

- A. The Holocaust served "to galvanize Jewish Zionism into intense activity" (p. 179);
- B. It "won over" Jewish opinion in the United States to Zionism "and to the establishment of an independent Jewish state in Palestine" (p. 180);
- C. It released such a flood of European Jewish refugees in the immediate post-war years that Palestinians "have asked why they should be made to suffer . . . for the sins of modern Europe!" (p. 181).

Although these points are not false, yet their isolation perpetuates an ignorance of the wider spectrum of the social, political and religious dimensions of the Holocaust as they

affect both the Middle East and the world community of Arabs, Christians and Jews. The burgeoning bibliography of recent years by Christian writers on the Holocaust is only one indicator of the complexity of the topic.

One must question the validity of a survey which seeks to describe the socio-political history of the Jews within the limits of their religious history as recorded in the Bible. Hebrew Scripture contains much material concerning pre-exilic Israel, but relates little after 586 B.C.E. *Biblical Backgrounds*, therefore, commits a serious error in its complete omission of the almost 2,000-year development of post-biblical Rabbinic Judaism and its pre-eminent role in the identity and survival of the Jewish people up to the present!

In a similar manner one is struck by the neglect of the bulk of specifically Arab factors influencing the Arab-Israeli conflict. It is not sufficient to employ Hebrew Scriptures as the main source for an understanding of the role of the Arabs in the Middle East. Certainly Arabic cultural development and identity has not languished in flaccid passivity since the days of Ishmael! It is imperative that there exist an awareness of the integrity of Arab history and the significance of the religious tenets of the prophetic civilization of Islam as they exert socio-political influences upon the Middle East. The cry of "jihad," Islamic Holy War, has been heard more than once during the history of the Middle East and its present turmoil.

One must regrettably conclude that the rubric of "past as 'prologue' to the present and the future" as it is applied in *Biblical Backgrounds of the Middle East Conflict* reduces the expansive complexity of the Arab-Israeli conflict to an uneven oversimplification.

WILLIAM A. HARTFELDER, JR.

Donum Gentilicium: New Testament Studies in Honour of David Daube, ed. by E. Bammel, C. K. Barrett, & W. D. Davies. Oxford University Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. ix + 342. \$37.50.

The point of the title of this book of New Testament Studies, *Donum Gentilicium*, is that Professor Daube is a Jewish scholar, whereas the contributors are Gentiles. Professor Daube is a world-renowned authority

on Roman law: he has held chairs in the Faculty of Law at Aberdeen and Oxford, and more recently (and concurrently) at Berkeley, California, and Constance, South Germany. He is also known for his studies in Jewish law and for the illumination that he has brought to bear from this area on the interpretation of the New Testament. His book on *The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism* (London, 1956) is well-known as an outstanding contribution to both Christian and Jewish studies. One of his essays in that work left its mark on the rendering of John 4:9 in The New English Bible, namely, "Jews and Samaritans, it should be noted, do not use vessels in common."

The present book contains contributions from twenty scholars—American, British, Canadian, Finnish, German, and Swedish. Eight of them are in English, twelve in German. W. D. Davies writes a warmly personal foreword and the twenty studies are followed by a "Bibliographia Daubeana," stretching from 1932 to 1977.

Several essays draw attention to the interrelatedness of Judaism and Christianity. C.F.D. Moule offers an understanding of forgiveness in Christianity and Judaism under which God's pardon is not merited, but is nonetheless conditional on one's capacity to receive it ("forgive us as we have forgiven"). Walter Zimmerli compares the beatitudes of Matthew 5 with the Old Testament, and Otto Michel shows how Jewish visionary motifs can help the reader to understand the Damascus road traditions of Saul/Paul. Joachim Jeremias explores the Jewish cultic associations of the Last Supper. Barnabas Lindars discusses the points of resemblance and difference between Jesus and the Pharisaic teachers. J.D.M. Derrett looks at the parable of the friend at midnight from a fresh perspective, concluding with comments on Jesus' midrashic technique. C. K. Barrett carries forward the debate on the relation between the Jewish *shaliach* and the Christian apostle. E. P. Sanders deals with the fulfillment of the Mosaic law in Paul and Judaism. K. H. Rengstorff, dealing with Rom. 11:16f., not only uses Rabbinic analogies to explain the metaphor of the olive tree, but thereby explains the structure of the Epistle itself. Birgen Gerhardsson relates I Cor. 13 to Paul's rabbinical heritage, and Harald Riesenfeld sees in I Cor. 13:3 an allusion to Dan. 3:96 (LXX). Wilhelm Wuellner explores the

background of the triad "wise . . . mighty . . . noble" of I Cor. 1:26. Matthew Black looks at the Jewish and Christian origins of the two witnesses of Rev. 11:3f. (he could also have mentioned the curious seventeenth-century sect of the Mugglestonians whose two founders, Ludowicke Muggleston and his cousin, John Reeve, claimed to be the two witnesses!). Ethelbert Stauffer writes on the repeated commendation of young men in the Greek History of Susanna, and argues that *neoteros* in I Pet. 5:5, I Tim. 5:1f., Titus 2:6 reflects the "Tamid" (a sort of rabbinic ordinance). Miss J. M. Ford analyzes the imagery of the heavenly Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation in relation to orthodox Judaism. Hugo Odeberg (now deceased) presents some curiosities from the cosmology of the Zohar. B. Freudenberger studies the meaning of *Romanas caerimonias recognoscere* in the Acts of Cyprian. Ernst Bammel reflects on the remark ascribed to Akiba that poverty in the daughters of Jacob is as lovely as a red bridle on the neck of a white horse. Morton Smith considers the permanence of the forced conversions to Judaism under the Hasmonaeans, and Gösta Lindeskog outlines the beginnings of the so-called "Jewish-Christian" problem.

As the reader will perceive, these essays cover a wide range of approaches and interests, many of which relate to the mutual illumination of Judaism and early Christianity, an approach well-exemplified by the scholar in whose honor this book was compiled.

The craftsmanship of the book, it may be remarked in conclusion, is altogether in accord with the outstanding typographical work for which the Clarendon Press at Oxford is justly famous.

BRUCE M. METZGER

Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free, by F. F. Bruce. Wm. B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1977. Pp. 491. \$13.95.

The Rylands Professor of Biblical Criticism and Exegesis at the University of Manchester, England, has written a comprehensive volume on the Apostle Paul that presents extensive worthwhile reading and information. F. F. Bruce (the Library of Congress card reveals the names "Frederick Fyvie," remind-

ing us that the familiar "F. F." of the title page is not a name in itself) has contributed this excellent work out of his "love for Paul" and "to share with others something of the rich reward which" he himself has "reaped from the study of Paul" carried on over fifty years (p. 15). Despite its motivation, out of "love for Paul," it is far from a sentimental work, but, as one would expect from F. F. Bruce, is, rather, written in a scholarly manner (but for wide appeal) and offers a wealth of facts along with a variety of opinions highly worthy of consideration.

The only actual flaw in this undoubtedly commendable book is its lack of a scriptural index. The included index does indicate the pages on which, for example, he discusses Galatians, but one has to search through them to find exactly where he presents his views on Gal. 2:1f. With the addition of such an index, the value and usefulness of this fine writing would have been greatly enhanced. It is possible, however, that the omission was an intentional one, if Professor Bruce perhaps did not wish his work to be employed as a reference work (for which it certainly can serve) but preferred that it be read from beginning to end consecutively.

One other point that could be seen as a large drawback to Bruce's book ends up, upon further reflection, to be an asset after all. That is, the author has determined the structure of his book by the outline of Paul's activity as portrayed in Acts, the assumption thus being that to a great extent Acts presents historical material. Acts, writes Bruce, is a "source of high historical value" (p. 16) and "the Paul of Acts is the historical Paul as he was seen and depicted by a sympathetic and accurate but independent observer" (p. 17). Initially this perspective causes someone with less confident views on Acts as a source of history to look askance at much of the content of Bruce's book, especially when Acts is used as the "framework" (p. 17) for Paul's letters. But one soon discovers that the framework is extremely beneficial and handy, be it historical or not, and that the information is in no way decisively colored by Bruce's opinions as to the framework's historical reliability. In fact, what the framework does is to provide a truly interesting perspective for viewing Paul's letters and life, and more important it serves as a welcome corrective to the danger of seeing his letters and theology as somehow unrelated

to history, but to the contrary as letters which both grew out of and responded to actual historical happenings, unable to be interpreted apart from this grounding—an obvious point yet often unconsciously overlooked.

The first of Bruce's thirty-eight chapters (the brevity of each chapter, possibly in part due to their being an outgrowth of lecture material, is a help towards easier reading) deals with "The Rise of Rome," and from this historical background he proceeds to a chapter on "Jews under Foreign Rule," one on Tarsus, ones on Paul as a Roman citizen and as a "Hebrew of Hebrews," one on Jesus, one on the beginning of the Church after the resurrection, and finally to chapter 8, on Paul the "Persecutor," and chapter 9, Paul the Christian. Once the reader arrives at the subject of the Apostle Paul specifically, the preceding historical setting proves extremely helpful in comprehending Paul as an historical person of his own particular times and situation.

In terms of arrangement of material, what Professor Bruce does is to pick up material from Paul's letters according to how passages relate chronologically to his life, e.g. Galatians 1, on Paul's "conversion experience," is discussed early on (chapter 9), whereas other parts of Galatians are brought up as pertinent, whether concerning his relation to the Jerusalem Church, the Antioch incident, the place of the law, or whatever. At the same time he brings in material from other letters (and Acts) that relates to whatever stage of Paul's life is under discussion. Of course, he runs into some difficulties when this schema does not allow for the natural inclusion of certain subjects or contents of letters, e.g. his chapter on the sacraments (25) does not seem particularly logically placed, but such feelings are negligible compared to the overall benefit, already indicated, of his framework.

The three outstanding features of this work on Paul are: 1) its comprehensive inclusion of controversial exegetical issues on, seemingly, most Pauline passages; 2) its full references to articles on these same issues (the footnotes provide an excellent bibliography, especially as supplemented by four pages of bibliography, mostly books, in the back); and 3) its clarity of expression and its fairness in presenting views. Whether he is dealing with what "kata sarka" really means in II Cor. 5:16 (incidentally, he employs

Greek words, but in a way that would not distract greatly the non-Greek reading person and yet adds considerable value for the others), what Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was (this critic disagrees with Bruce's insistence on its being a physical condition [p. 135]), whether or not Titus was circumcised, what the historical relation is between Gal. 2 and Acts 15, and so on—with whichever of these endless exegetical issues he is dealing with, the reader is exposed to a wide number of diversified opinions, not just Bruce's, along with the sources for them. He presents the issues and the views with clarity and with fairness. For an author who could be termed "conservative," it is a decided tribute to him that never does a reader have the impression that Bruce's conclusion on an issue is based on any preconceived judgments but instead always on the evidence at hand as he sees and understands it. This attitude and procedure is appreciated, as is also the manner in which Bruce will offer some speculative ideas, yet cautiously warn the reader that we simply do not know, e.g. what the source of the "mysteries" Paul shares is (p. 143; see e.g., I Cor. 15:51), whether or not Paul's "mother" (Rom. 16:13) might have been the wife of the African Symeon who mothered Paul during his stay in Antioch (p. 149)—whatever the intriguing ideas speculated on, his concluding, humble attitude is respected and appreciated—an attitude at times absent in the work of Biblical critics.

Bruce also has the ability to bring out points and see insights into passages which one could easily otherwise ignore, an ability surely cultivated over his years of experience with the words of Paul. For example, he discusses the surprising point that the Early Church never "brought to light," so to speak, any saying of Jesus' on circumcision when such a saying would assuredly and obviously have been helpful (pp. 101 & 105). Similarly, when Bruce brings out the probability that Paul "still submitted to synagogue discipline" during the stage of his career that he experienced the forty lashes less one (p. 127) and the likelihood that Paul must have directed his persecutions against the Hellenistic disciples, most of whom had left Judea, since the Judean churches did not know him early in his career (p. 127), a reader who has studied Paul quite extensively wonders why such thoughts had not occurred to him or her without Bruce's direction. Such points occur

page after page in this book, and the end result is an extremely stimulating one. On few points can one readily criticize Bruce (e.g., that the self-sufficiency of Phil. 4:11 relates to Christ's spiritual self-sufficiency [p. 142]); rather one (this reader, at least) normally agrees with the points he makes (e.g., that glossolalia for Paul was "of little value or importance,") partly because he knew it to take place among pagans (p. 143).

Bruce's method of following Paul's life and career according to the order of Acts is highlighted by the map in the (identical) front and back inside covers presenting Paul's missionary journeys. In chapter 33 Bruce nears the end when he describes "Paul and Roman Christianity," but follows this up with an entire chapter devoted to the letter to Philemon, the contents of which he presumably could not fit in well elsewhere. Then in chapter 35, "Principalities and Powers," he writes about parts of Colossians. Chapter 36, on Ephesians, follows, because he believes it to have been composed by Paul during his Roman imprisonment. (Bruce discusses the possibility of non-Pauline authorship but discards it by going through Paul's main themes and judging how they do appear in Ephesians. At one point this critic finds him in possible error when he justifies Ephesians 2:8, which speaks of salvation as a past event, by reference to Rom. 8:24, for despite the aorist of "we were saved" in the latter passage, the context and the "hope" in that verse may well show that Paul is viewing salvation as not yet completed by any means.) Although the chapter on Ephesians presents an interesting discussion and perspective, it seems unwarranted to have its purpose be that of maintaining Pauline authorship (this reader sees Ephesians as clearly containing Pauline fragments and "roots," but not as a totality being by Paul), but his comments such as the letter's relations to Qumran texts are certainly of value.

In his next to final chapter Bruce cautiously entertains various possible sources for discovering what happened to Paul after Acts closes, so to speak. He considers the Pastorals, Clement, the Muratorian canon, and the Acts of Peter. His own belief is that Paul was released from prison, re-arrested, and finally beheaded in Rome, ca. 65 (p. 450). Among the 16 Plates Bruce includes, one is of the inscription discovered in 1835 which is thought to mark the place of Paul's tomb in

Rome, a possibility favored by Bruce because of its location in a pagan cemetery, "not the environment which later piety would have chosen" (p. 451).

From chapter 4 through chapter 37 the reader is led from Paul's birth to his death. The author has done a praiseworthy job of combining events and theology, of offering a possible progression of Paul's life and thought, and certainly of forcing the fellow-admirer of Paul to ground Paul's theological reflections in history and to refrain from lifting them into any irrelevant, invalid abstractions. Bruce has produced an amazingly complete "compendium on Paul" and has without doubt succeeded in sharing effectively both his love for Paul and his insights into him.

Perhaps Bruce's words on Paul in his final chapter ("Concluding Reflections") can be not irreverently applied to Bruce himself: "He has something worth saying, and in saying it he communicates something of himself. . . . And what he has to say is so important . . ." (p. 457).

At the very end Bruce brings the reader back to part of the book's title, *Apostle of the Heart Set Free*, based on II Cor. 1:17, and speaks of Paul as a "campaigner for spiritual liberty" (p. 474). Defending, apologizing for, and, in a sense, excusing Paul Bruce writes that Paul on principle denied "prejudices and discriminations" any place in the Christian community and "looked forward to the day when racial, religious, sexual and social prejudices or discrimination" would be "banished from the whole new creation" (p. 474). It is as if Bruce recognizes that the man he so admires could be accused of falling short in relation to his own apostolic demands of love and equality, but wants readers to understand that Paul existed, lived, in a different situation than our own: Paul awaited the near eschaton, yet in some sense lived in it; we must continually live as if it were to come tomorrow and yet as if it is never to come—and thus put into practice now some of what Paul—apostle of freedom—postponed.

Bruce has written an important book. It is thorough for the scholar yet not overly complicated for the non-scholar. It is for any student of the Apostle Paul who, as Bruce, continually seeks to know and understand more clearly the man Paul and the words *he* wrote out of his love for Christ.

ELIZABETH G. EDWARDS

The Debate About the Bible (Inerrancy versus Infallibility), by Stephen T. Davis. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1977. Pp. 149. \$5.45 (paper).

Stephen Davis' intended audience in his book on biblical authority is the body of Christians who label themselves "evangelicals," but a far wider audience can readily benefit from it. His principal concern is to bridge the gap between two wings of evangelicals—the more conservative and the less—or rather to allow the less conservative (such as himself) continued membership among "evangelicals." He also wants to prevent any evangelical from ostracizing him/herself from the evangelical community because of an inability to accept the doctrine of inerrancy. He observes the divisive effect of those who insist on errancy, and with his doctrine of infallibility he attempts—and surely succeeds—in playing a mediating role as what could be termed a "reconciling evangelical."

One must say only "surely succeeds" because whether or not his success is actual is an opinion that can rightly come solely from one who considers him/herself an "evangelical." (This reviewer finds adequate challenge in struggling with being/becoming a Christian without worrying about the branch of Christianity in which one's membership lies.)

Davis, associate professor of Philosophy and Religion at Claremont Men's College, has produced a book clearly expressed, concisely written, logically structured, soundly argued, and in many parts helpfully outlined by numbered points. The very progression of his chapters witnesses to the logical mind of the philosopher he is: His first chapter reviews the doctrine of inerrancy held by many evangelicals; each of his three succeeding chapters picks up one of the three main, usual arguments in favor of inerrancy and shows the weaknesses, loopholes, escape-gaps, and downfalls of each one. First there is the "Biblical Argument," i.e., that the Bible itself claims inerrancy for itself; then the "Epistemological Argument," i.e., that if one does not know the Bible as inerrant, one can know for certain no doctrines of the Christian faith; and finally the "Slippery Slide Argument," i.e., that if one slips away from inerrancy, one will slip away from all evangelical positions. (He terms these arguments the EA

and the SSA, but why did he not call the first the BA?) Exactly what these positions are is never fully clarified, but he suggests that among others three are: humanity's lostness in sin and need for redemption, Christ's bodily resurrection, and people's need for commitment to Christ (p. 83). In the fifth chapter Davis turns from refuting these three arguments for inerrancy to refuting the actual claim itself. In the following chapter, "Infallibility," he presents his own, preferred alternative doctrine, and finally in the seventh chapter he discusses some serious repercussions ("Implications") to take into account for whichever of the two views one holds.

Near the beginning of his book and frequently throughout (e.g., pp. 16 & 23) Davis clarifies the distinction, for him, between "inerrant" and "infallible," the former professing no errors of any sort, on any subject, to be contained in the Bible, and the latter professing no erroneous or misleading statements related to faith and practice. As Davis himself sees, any word can be employed to speak of Biblical authority as long as one qualifies it sufficiently to suit one's own views! He is somewhat willing to give up "infallible" in favor of a more positive word (note how both familiar terms state what the Bible does *not* do; this reviewer is certainly attracted to the idea of a word which states what the Bible *does* do!), but partly for the sake of tradition, he prefers to hang on to it (pp. 118f.). (Why, this reviewer wonders, any single word whatsoever? Perhaps to facilitate discussion; perhaps because of some need to be assured of a common ground.)

Since Davis' critics will complain that he in some sense does not say enough for the Bible, it is interesting when he makes the commendable point that inerrancy probably does not say enough about the Bible (p. 29)! That is, inerrancy concerns itself with the Bible's factual claims and neglects to see that such terminology is irrelevant to many of the Bible's literary forms, e.g., liturgy, poetry, ethics. Davis is so clearly correct, and one wonders how an inerrantist could deny such a point.

Another noteworthy point made by Davis concerns the inerrantist's belief that actual inerrancy lies in the autographs—the original manuscripts—not in the manuscripts available today. He wonders whether the inerrantist would worship the autographs if they came to light, despite the Bible's command against

idolatry (p. 80)! (One naturally wonders, anyway, what sort of idolatry is actually taking place in any extremely conservative views about biblical authority.)

A weak point in Davis' book is his fifth chapter, "The Case Against Inerrancy." He begins by giving four arguments against inerrancy: (1) lack of support in Scripture; (2) problems raised by inerrantist's device of appealing to "intention"; (3) emphasis on the wrong tasks (i.e., minutia rather than proclamation); and (4) illusion that all Christianity stands or falls on the defense of inerrancy (see p. 94). The problem is that No. (1) simply repeats, essentially, his arguments against "BA"; No. (2) is still against inerrancy's arguments, not quite inerrancy itself; and Nos. (3) and (4) concern not the doctrine but the results of holding to this doctrine, as valid and important as his last two points are. In this same chapter, after discussing six passages in which the Bible does err, so to speak (e.g., the relative size of the mustard seed and whether or not the disciples were to take along staffs on their missionary journeys), he concludes with four reasons why inerrancy is not defensible. But it is confusing, for these four reasons ([1] Bible does not teach inerrancy, but [2] seems to point the opposite way; [3] philosophical arguments do not succeed; and [4] doctrine is open to various difficulties—pp. 112-113) do not coincide with the four with which he began his chapter!

At several points one admires Davis' attitude, e.g., in his general openness, his willingness to admit that his view of infallibility may one day be proven fallible, and his confession that determining what parts of the Bible concern faith and practice, not to speak of which are "crucial" to faith and practice, is a task full of ambiguities (cf. e.g., p. 125). He sees and admits the weaknesses of his own position. One point, however, that he seems not to admit is that nowhere does he explain what he means by saying "the Bible is the Word of God." He freely denies definitions such as containing the Word and becoming the Word (pp. 114 & 115), but does not offer a cogent description of his own understanding.

Probably Davis' most "right on" statement, in this reviewer's opinion, comes in his final chapter when he writes: "I find these predictions [which inerrantists make in regard to what will happen if the church does not

embrace inerrancy] hard to credit, for I see God at work in the world constantly creating new situations and new opportunities for his people" (p. 131). It is this concept of "newness"—actually of God's *freedom*—which this reviewer sees inerrantists as so dangerously shutting out; perhaps she is wrong—perhaps not.

The most—if not really the only—disappointing comments of Davis come in his final chapter. It should be said, first, that throughout the book this reader continually wondered whether from the viewpoint of evangelicals each time Davis wrote "evangelical Christian" one could actually, in their eyes, cross out the "evangelical." One hoped, however, that Davis did not hold with this possible perspective. But then he writes: "How *do* we decide who is an evangelical and who is not?", and proceeds to discuss passages in I John since it "deals more than any other [book] with the question of criteria for who is in the fellowship and who is not" (p. 132). That Davis does after all see "evangelical" as synonymous with "Christian" (if one assumes that being "in the fellowship" is synonymous with being a Christian) is obviously disappointing. Such an attitude on his part and others leaves one extremely fearful—fearful, that is, not for the non-evangelicals (whoever they are), but for the evangelicals, and thus for a fairly large part of the present Church.

Regardless of these impressions, all in all Davis has written a book valuable not only, it is hoped, in reconciling evangelicals "intramurally," but also helpful for non-evangelicals in obtaining a clearer idea of the debate taking place therein. Also the book encourages one to come to terms with one's own view towards biblical authority and, if it is vague and inarticulate, to vow to strengthen it in a defensible, effective, and articulate manner.

ELIZABETH G. EDWARDS

Reflections on History and Hope: Yesterday, Today, and What Next?, by Roland H. Bainton. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn., 1978. Pp. 141. \$3.95 (paper).

This paperback original offers Professor

Roland Bainton of Yale's reflections on the meaning of history as seen with the observant eyes of a distinguished church historian, pondering deeply on the adequacy of various patterns proposed for the understanding of human history.

These include, successively, fate and fortune as controlling human destiny, the cyclical theory of history, the 18th and 19th century notion of progress, the failures of success and the successes of failure (the most impressive example of the latter is the crucifixion of Christ), and causation (involving a discussion of the causes of the failure of the Roman Empire).

Next Dr. Bainton considers theological insights into the meaning of history. A chapter on God in History deals with both iniquity and inequity, and is illuminating on Abraham's dilemma—to save the boy Isaac at the cost of disobeying God's command to sacrifice him—when discussing Luther's and also Kierkegaard's defense of Abraham's decision, which Bainton believes was a wrong one! He sides with Erasmus whose rejoinder to Luther's "Let God be God!" was "Let God be good!" The ensuing chapter deals with the Jesus of History and textual difficulties as well as those created by the nature miracles. An admirable chapter discusses the historicity of the Resurrection of Jesus. Professor Bainton recognizes that many have testified to the impact of the living Christ on their lives and that "there is absolutely no doubt that the resurrection has been cardinal in Christian experience, both as a ground of assurance for our own immortality and as a source of strength and comfort through an indwelling spirit" (p. 77). The following chapter deals with the Christ of Faith and considers the adequacy of the christology of gnosticism, kenoticism, and adoptionism, the three options considered by the early Christian community. The Church in History is the theme of the next chapter, showing how the church has dominated society, withdrawn from society, or collaborated with society.

"Today and What Next" considers the crises of the present, and "The Historian's Craft" which deals with finding the evidence, deciding what is reliable evidence and assessing its meaning. In this chapter in particular there is far too much compression.

Generally, however, the work is written with a wide overview of history both secular

and sacred, with telling and vivid anecdotes, and a deep compassion for humanity, and is well worth its modest price.

It is marred, however, by a few obvious errors, probably of proofreading or of memory. The important battle at which Constantine believed Christ gave him the victory was at the Milvian bridge (not the Mulvian bridge as appears twice on p. 120). It was the Luddite riots in which workmen smashed their looms, not 'Ludlow' as on p. 102. Nkrumah was the Ghanaian leader, not 'Nkrumaj' (p. 114) and, most curious error of all, Bainton's former colleague wrote not *Christianity and Culture* but *Christ and Culture* (p. 136). One great bonus for all former students of Professor Bainton or of the admirers of his biographies of Luther and Erasmus is the excellent speaking likeness of him on the front page, a portrait by Deane Keller now in the Yale University Art Gallery, evocative of the liveliness and compassion of a great Christian humanist.

HORTON DAVIES

Princeton University

Calvinist Preaching and Iconoclasm in the Netherlands, 1544-1569, by Phyllis Mack Crew. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1978. Pp. 221. \$19.95.

This fine historical study by an Associate Professor of History at Rutgers University is a publication in the distinguished new series of Cambridge Studies in Early Modern History. While not a book for the general reader, though clearly and imaginatively written, it should be of considerable general interest to Presbyterian and Reformed ministers intrigued by the behavior of their forbears in unsettled times like our own in the Netherlands of the mid-sixteenth century.

Dr. Crew's main concern is to understand the causes of the much discussed events of the "Troubles" of the year 1566, when Protestant ministers and lay preachers gathered vast crowds who in various southern cities and towns engaged in iconoclasm. Oddly and happily enough, this image-breaking was not accompanied with cruelty to Catholic priests, such as occurred at roughly the same time in France.

Hitherto the "Troubles" have been accounted for as a purely social protest on the part of the disinherited, or as a rehearsal for the later Dutch Revolt on the part of Calvinist ministers. Professor Crew shows convincingly that each hypothesis fits only a selection of the facts. Her own view, greatly simplified, is that the moderateness of the iconoclasm is explicable in terms of the general desire for both social and religious authority, and through the political ambiguity of the ministers and hedge preachers, and the varying backgrounds of the ministers who were in exile. Such restraint would be overcome only when King Philip's and the Duke of Alba's intentions were only too vindictively clear, and persecution would fuse both Reformed ministers and people to the flashpoint of Revolt.

This is a superb study of materials in Dutch, Flemish, French and English sources and interpretations, with narrative vividness, and a high independence of judgment.

HORTON DAVIES

The Priest in Community: Exploring the Roots of Ministry, by Urban T. Holmes, III. The Seabury Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 193. \$9.95.

Learning Through Liturgy, by Gwen Kennedy Neville and John H. Westerhoff, III. The Seabury Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 189. \$9.95.

These two books mark exciting advances in the discipline of Christian Education. While still insisting on the importance of doctrine and ethics in the intellectual, active mode, they wish to complement this with the recognition of the importance of sacred narratives, symbols, and ritual, which represent a passive mode of apprehension. For Professor Westerhoff this requires a marriage of catechesis and of liturgy, each reinforcing the other. His book, in which the symbolic and ritualistic mode's significance is prepared for by a fascinating study made by Professor Gwen Kennedy Neville of folk liturgies in the American South (including an intriguing analysis of the Presbyterian Montreat community in the summer) affirms the important insights of anthropology for understanding

the role of religion. In his view—and few will quarrel with him—one has only to contrast the initiation rite into an African tribe going through disorientation, and liminality to reorientation—to see how trivial and stereotyped confirmation or admission to church membership has become in most Christian Communion today. He insists, rightly, that Christian ritual is the most powerful factor integrating the Christian community and transmitting its values from generation to generation. It is the insights of cultural anthropology and of the history of religions, as well as those of psychology, which are making Christian Education so fascinating a field of study and practice.

Dean Urban T. Holmes has written more than an interesting volume: it is provocative of thought, revisionist in no superficial way, and highly relevant. Apart from his extraordinary humanness (a gift which only obtrudes when he tells us twice in the same book that he is six feet six inches high), his humor, and his honesty, he deploys skilled insights from analytical and historical psychology (Jung to Julian Jaynes), primitive anthropology and cultural anthropology, physical sciences, and, most especially, the history of philosophy. His anecdotes and citations are admirably fresh grist for the preacher's mill.

Both books will illuminate the priest's and minister's calling, reassure him (or her) of its worthwhileness, suggest developments of which he may be only partially aware, and temptations which must be overcome to maintain authenticity as God's representative in creating order out of the disorder of our life, and entering into the demonic experiences of others as an angel, and in our secular and overrationalized world acting as a "mystagogue"—to use Holmes's favorite word—for the man or woman of God in authority.

There are spots on the sun. I noticed "Laco daire" twice misspelled on p. 140 of *The Priest in the Community*, while *Learning through Liturgy* has a plural subject and singular verb on p. 21, and "principle" instead of "principal" on p. 151, and a rather reluctant "emerged" instead of "immersed" in baptism on p. 156.

HORTON DAVIES

neth B. Murdock (with the assistance of Elizabeth W. Miller). Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1977. Pp. 500. \$25.00.

Cotton Mather is, as Edmund S. Morgan recently called him, "the Puritan you love to hate." A controversial figure from his own day to the present, Mather has earned brickbats for his role in the infamous Salem witchcraft trials, his egotism, his attempts to reinterpret Puritan theology in a New England undergoing significant social, political, and religious change. And yet, partially because of his incredibly prolific and prolix pen and partially because of his tremendous intellect, he simply cannot be ignored; historians still flock to him and his writings in somewhat the same fashion that the American press remains fascinated with Richard Nixon—although there are obvious limits to the comparison.

Mather was, quite simply, a genius. He was the grandson of two of the founders of Massachusetts Bay, Richard Mather and John Cotton, and the son of Increase Mather. He began his studies at the Boston Latin School, and by the time he was twelve, he could speak Latin, "had composed many *Latin* exercises, both in prose and verse," and "conversed with *Cato*, *Corderius*, *Terence*, *Tully*, *Ovid*, and *Virgil*." The latter's *Aeneid* provided him with the cadences for the famous opening section of the *Magnalia*: "I WRITE the *Wonders* of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION, flying from the Depravations of *Europe*, to the *American Strand*." By the age of twelve, he had also mastered Greek and worked through much of the New Testament and began his study of Hebrew, which he polished at Harvard, along with his study of "*Logic and Physic*," "the Use of the *Globes*," arithmetic ("as far as was ordinary"), and "in a Word, describing the Circle of all the Academical Studies." He was graduated by Harvard in 1678, when he was sixteen, the youngest student who had received the A.B. from Harvard, and took a master's degree in 1681.

Mather continued to develop this extraordinary learning, and his literary corpus is enormous. His most extensive work—a commentary on every verse of every book of the Bible—remains, perhaps mercifully, unpublished, but a bibliography of his writings

Magnalia Christi Americana: Books I and II, by Cotton Mather, ed. by Ken-

contains more than 400 titles. The *Magnalia*, especially Books I and II, has attracted the greatest historical interest, and Sacvan Bercovitch recently used Mather's biography of John Winthrop, "Nehemias Americanus," as the basis for his penetrating reinterpretation of Puritanism, *The Puritan Origins of the American Self*. Book I consists of a survey of the early history of the New England colonies, and Book II is a series of biographical sketches of the lives of the governors of the colonies. Published as it was in 1702, the *Magnalia* was a work of historical apologetics—an attempt to defend the New England experiment in creating a holy commonwealth before its detractors in Britain but also to remind a new generation of New Englanders of the historical legacy which they had to sustain and live up to. In many respects, the First Great Awakening—with its promise of sudden conversion and its reorientation toward the future—was a response to the awful burden of history which Mather and others had placed upon a New England still on its errand in the wilderness.

This new edition of Books I and II of the *Magnalia* makes the text available with superb introductions. There are two gracefully-written essays by Murdock, one on Mather's career and another on the writing and subsequent evaluation of the *Magnalia*; in addition, George H. Williams has provided an excellent analysis of the motif of the wilderness that so profoundly shaped Puritan consciousness and subsequent American religious and social history. The scholarly apparatus is beyond cavil. Mather's *Magnalia* is filled with puns, allusions, parodies, and references to other works, and these sources are identified in the notes, a prodigious job of historical research and detective work. It is little wonder that one contemporary observed of Mather, "His Library is very large and numerous; but, had his Books been fewer when he wrote his 'History,' it would have pleased us better." Murdock and Elizabeth Miller have done what Mather himself did not do, and this volume stands as a model of historical editing *par excellence*.

JOHN M. MULDER

Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform: An Essay on Religion and Social Change in America, 1607-1977, by Wil-

liam G. McLoughlin. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1978. Pp. 239. \$12.50.

This volume represents another contribution to the Chicago History of American Religion, a series edited by Martin E. Marty, and the author comes to his subject after extensive work on American evangelicalism, including studies of Isaac Backus and the New England Baptists, a survey of nineteenth and twentieth century revivalism and biographies of two of revivalism's most notable practitioners—Billy Sunday and Billy Graham. The book is, in many respects, a major work, despite the author's disclaimer of it as "an essay" and its relatively brief length. In its scope, it is the most far-reaching attempt to analyze the phenomenon of religious awakenings in American history; in its interdisciplinary approach, it breaks new ground and sets the awakenings at the heart of American culture, rather than viewing them as fringe movements that are interesting only in terms of their impact on churches or because of some of their more bizarre manifestations.

The key to understanding McLoughlin's thesis lies in his utilization of anthropological and sociological methodologies, preeminently the work of Anthony F. C. Wallace. Using Wallace's concept of "revitalization movements," McLoughlin argues that American culture has witnessed five "awakenings," which he defines as periods of "fundamental social and intellectual reorientation of the American belief-value system, behavior patterns, and institutional structure." These periods of revitalization have interacted with "a constant culture core of rather broadly stated beliefs" (p. 10), redefining and rejuvenating personal and social identity at times of severe cultural strain. Revivals represent the impact of revitalization on individuals, but awakenings are social and cultural in their impact and scope. In short, the history of awakenings is not merely the history of religious and theological change but basic alterations in the structure and self-understanding of American culture.

The common core of cultural values which serves as the touchstone for awakenings is seen by McLoughlin as in large measure a product of Puritanism and the American colonial experience. The first of the awaken-

ings was the early years of Puritan settlement itself, but McLoughlin resorts to traditional terminology and periodization in analyzing the First and Second Great Awakenings. The final two awakenings will come as the greatest surprise to historians; McLoughlin dates them from 1890-1920 and "1960-1990(?)." These last two chapters will undoubtedly prompt the strongest dissent and debate. I find his argument of revitalization compelling and convincing for the "Great Awakenings," but in the latter two, he is forced into describing cultural change almost exclusively, and the actual religious component of this change is markedly reduced. It is less than clear why the heyday of Dwight L. Moody should be subordinated to the relatively brief and meteoric career of Billy Sunday; it might also be argued that if cultural change is the key factor, then earlier periods might warrant the term "awakening," e.g., 1690-1730 or 1850-1880. Despite the many defects of McLoughlin's last chapter on the contemporary awakening, it does provide a perspective on American religious life and culture different than that of Sydney Ahlstrom, who emphasizes "declension" and cultural disintegration in current religious developments.

One of the virtues of McLoughlin's treatment is that his sociological approach does not mean a neglect of religious ideas, which are seen as central to the transformations of American society. An irritating and inexcusable defect of the book is the absence of footnotes in lieu of a bibliographical essay. As a whole, McLoughlin's work will serve as the basis for new work in American social and religious history; if his thesis is accepted, it will mean that no understanding of American society will be complete without a full acknowledgment of the crucial changes represented and embodied in the awakenings.

JOHN M. MULDER

Religion in the Old South, by Donald G. Mathews. University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Ill., 1977. Pp. 274. \$10.95.

For far more than a century, it has been obvious to Southerners and non-Southerners alike that there was something different, something unique about the religiosity that was spawned and nurtured south of the

Mason-Dixon line and carried into the twentieth century and into the White House during the 1970s. The unique qualities of this religion have been hinted at, alluded to, and sometimes described, but in every case they seem to have eluded even the most perceptive observers. Southern religion remained in definition roughly comparable to one judge's formulation of pornography: he couldn't tell you what it was, but he knew it when he saw it.

Donald Mathews, Professor of History at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, has attempted in this brilliant book a historical survey and a thematic interpretation of Southern religion and culture, and the result is one that will provide new insight and perspective on an enduring religious tradition in American society. His earlier work focused on Methodism and slavery and on American abolitionists, as well as the history of the South, and it is clear that this volume represents the fruit of that earlier research and a vivid moral vision. C. Vann Woodward suggested many years ago that the South could serve as an archetype for the struggles of the American conscience, and Mathews' analysis confirms that insight. Read in the late 1970s, his book will reinforce and confirm the anguish which racism, sexism, and class have brought to the American churches and the society.

Religion in the Old South is actually an analysis of Southern evangelicalism. As such, it spends relatively little space on the seventeenth century and the weak and ineffectual role of Anglicanism; further, it focuses primarily on the growth of evangelical Protestantism from the mid-eighteenth century through the heightened sectional antagonisms of the mid-nineteenth century. Baptists and Methodists provide the core of the story, although Mathews' treatment is not denominational but attempts to analyze the underlying evangelical ethos of the South.

Mathews sees in early evangelicalism a movement with profound implications for transforming the social order. It provided lower- and middle-class whites with a clear interpretation of life and firm moral standards, but Mathews also emphasizes the way in which it offered a sense of community and identity for people who found themselves at the fringes of Southern society and alienated from it. Like H. Richard Niebuhr before him, Mathews sees the gradual ascent

of evangelicals into the middle and upper classes as a gradual compromising and weakening of the moral fervor that lay deep in the evangelical impulse. But ironically, as the white evangelicals "matured," they also turned to the black slaves among them in missionary activity, and it was these Afro-American Christians who received, adapted, and ultimately transformed evangelicalism into an eloquent statement of God's triumph over suffering, evil, and even death itself.

Two aspects of Mathews' book merit special attention. First, he describes the development of an evangelical conception of woman's "sphere," similar to the notion promulgated by Northern clerics, but in the South, the "lady" took on additional importance for undergirding the moral order of slave society. In the mother was lodged the primary responsibility for training in morality and religion within the home, which simultaneously restricted women but also provided a relatively autonomous sphere in which they could function. Like the slaves, they were subordinate to the control and domination of white men, but evangelical women sometimes grasped the connection between the equality they were offered in Christ and the possibility of challenging their status and the institution of slavery. The ideology of the slave system was based on the suppression of both blacks and women; the opposition to slavery was occasionally found in a recognition of their common lot. Too often, however, the political realities of the South and the power of the slave regime kept that potential alliance from being realized.

Second, Mathews strongly emphasizes a theme which has become the central finding of new research into religion and the Afro-American experience in slavery. In spite of considerable ambivalence and sometimes hostility toward evangelizing the slaves, and despite the extensive Christianization of the slave population, blacks did not appropriate a Euro-American Protestantism without making significant alterations in it. Aspects of African religions and culture interacted with Christianity to form Afro-American Christianity—highly evangelical at its core but demonstrably different from its white counterpart. The most significant difference, Mathews argues, was the black conception of God as an apocalyptic God, intervening in history to judge the righteous and the evil, over-

turning the temporal order, and justifying the elect people. At times this could lead to the bloody insurrection of Nat Turner, who saw himself as a prophet appointed by God to avenge evil, but more often it gave a sense of confidence and assurance that amidst all depravation, God would prevail. The most provocative and eloquent description of this characteristic of black Christianity comes in Mathews' analysis of the famous sermon, "The Sun do Move," by the black preacher, John Jasper. As whites thrilled to the cadences of Jasper's preaching and saw in it a repudiation of modern science, blacks saw something quite different, says Mathews. At the heart of Jasper's vision was a God who would disrupt even the laws of nature to save a people in bondage and distress.

There are portions of this book that do not read easily, and there are times when one wishes for more evidence for the bold generalizations and sweeping changes the author makes and describes. Yet it is a deeply moving and inspiring book, a summons to face the legacy of the past and a challenge to reshape the future.

JOHN M. MULDER

The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology, by Lesslie Newbigin. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1978. Pp. 214. \$4.95.

Scorned and lauded, missionary activity has been viewed as arising from a multitude of mixed motives. The existence of at least four such reasons for mission have been observed by Walter Freytag (the "pietist," "ecclesiastical" or "churchly," "humanist" and "apocalyptic") but, of course, there are others. They probably vary to the extent that there are different views of the Kingdom of God. A proper understanding of Christian mission is a question which elicits heated debate as much today as, for example, in the days of the first Gentile mission. Missiologist Lesslie Newbigin, a founder of the Church of South India and for several years Director of the Division of World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches, outlines in this book what he refers to as the "open secret" of missionary activity: "proclaiming the Kingdom of the Father,

sharing the life of the Son and bearing the witness of the Spirit."

While this does not strike one as particularly novel at first, Newbigin uses this trinitarian motif for mission in a helpful structural way. Following the Willingen (West Germany) world missionary conference in 1952, with its emphasis upon the *missio Dei* (that the source of mission is in the triune God), he first sketched out his thesis in a pamphlet entitled, "Trinitarian Faith for Today's Mission." Newbigin has further developed this material in lectures delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary in the summer of 1977 and succeeds in presenting here a brief, yet highly informative, readable introduction to this controversial topic. This is not a work of academic scholarship yet the insights which are developed in terms of "missionary principles and practice" (to use a definition of missiology coined by Robert Speer) are as deep as Newbigin's service to the church has been long. From the Second Vatican Council to the pronouncements of numerous Protestant theologians there has come in recent years a reaffirmation of the missionary character of the church, of the task that this implies, and a renewed confession of a pilgrim people for new openness toward the world to which the church is sent. The "grammar" for such a multifarious task is provided by and integrated in the triune God according to Newbigin.

Mission has three aspects. It is the proclamation of the Kingdom of the Father with a mandate that extends as wide as universal history. Here mission, as faith in action, is molded by tribulation and faithful witness under the sovereignty of God. God's hidden program became public in Jesus, however, who is the face of God's mission. Newbigin argues that to be faithful to the facts of Jesus' person and work, the first generation of disciples had to alter Jesus' own preaching of the Kingdom to a proclamation about Jesus. For the "Kingdom, or kingship, of God was no longer a distant hope or a faceless concept. It now had a name and a face. . . ." For Newbigin, the church can hold and live by this faith because Jesus was "designated Son of God in power. . ." (Rom. 1:4). This proclamation is not the property of the church but of the Spirit of God. "Mission is not just church extension. It is something more costly and revolutionary." It is

something done by the Spirit who, as the witness, changes both church and world.

As the church stands on the threshold of the third millennium after Christ's birth, in the midst of violent changes and shifts in the world situation, penetrating theological questions need to be dealt with. For example, what really is the definition of salvation? Why practice religion at all? Are we dealing with a merely enhanced form of the ego, of subjectivity, as was confidently asserted as the pious nineteenth-century wore on? Why should religion be seen as a proper area of concern? Newbigin sketches an answer here which takes us to the heart of the christological debates. For the question of authority is one that lay at the center of Jesus' ministry. With a dependence upon the work of Oscar Cullmann and Joachim Jeremias, we are presented with one who suffered for the sins of the world, who did not come to found a religion so much as to be the light, life and Lord. A strong Augustinian interpretation is applied which points us again in the direction of the Trinity as the only satisfying answer to the question posed by the person of Jesus. This answer is presented through Michael Polanyi's post-critical philosophy but it is obviously an area which requires a great deal of continued reflection as we face the implications of Nicene theology today.

The intriguing feature of Newbigin's paradigm is that it offers so much room for an interplay of form and freedom in missiological thought. This is particularly important with regard to what Arthur Johnston has recently called "the battle for world evangelism." With lines being drawn between Lausanne (1974) and Bangkok (1977), Newbigin offers a structure which has the potential of combining both a concern for the justice of God in the world on a supracongregational level with that of repentance at the congregational level. With all of his talk about a trinitarian rather than simply christocentric missiology, what one does look for, but not always find, is a fuller theological foundation for mission which reaches beyond an appeal to the person and work of Jesus—as vital as that may be. A helpful sketch for this can be seen in the recent work of Johannes Verkuyl who begins to lay the biblical foundation for mission in the Old Testament. Following the work of Johan H. Bavinck, J. Blauw, and Hans Werner Gensichen, Verkuyl attempts to look at the

structure of the biblical message in the Old Testament, pointing to four motifs: that of a universal horizon, God's work of rescue and liberation, election as a call to service, and Yahweh's opposition to the powers set against his liberating and gracious authority.

Not only does one come away from Newbigin's "sketch for a missionary theology" wishing for more in the area of foundational work but the usefulness of his trinitarian thesis for breaking out of present missiological impasses could be further exploited. For example, a too narrowly christocentric mission leads to a focus upon Jesus as an ideal type or model to be followed (along the lines of nineteenth-century Unitarian missions) on the one hand, or, on the other, to a pietistic monism of exclusively otherworldly concern (along the lines of fundamentalist mysticism). With a trinitarian emphasis in mission one is able to more fully keep in balance many facets of Christian faith with a view toward the entire scope of God's work in the world.

All that has been said thus far about Newbigin's threefold model is put to fruitful theological use as he presents, in briefly and clearly articulated terms, four of the chief theoretical and practical problems in current missiological discussion: (1) the question of the gospel in history; (2) the efficacy of liberation theology; (3) the debate over the (Fuller) "Church Growth" movement; and (4) the question of the encounter between the gospel and other living religious traditions. In this fourth area the strength of Newbigin's trinitarian paradigm is clearly seen. It provides him with what he calls "the grammar of dialogue." As all share in the common nature of the Father, we can be open to truth wherever it may be found. As particular members of Christ's body, we participate with others in work and dialogue out of a deep sense of commitment, standing vulnerable and exposed, seeking truth in humility but not fearful of sharing our knowledge of it. Finally, this is done in full reliance upon the Holy Spirit who is the source of change for ourselves and others.

In a day when all of our motives are being "sifted like wheat," the burden of missiology brings the question to the church: does her life conform to his calling to be like the "salt of the earth" and "the light of the world?" In W. A. Visser 't Hooft's words, this is the "time of testing" for Christian missions—

but not only for missions. For as both Karl Barth and Emil Brunner have said, if the church fails in her missionary obligation she is no longer the church. Like Christ, the church has been sent into the world not for her own welfare but for the world's. Newbigin's book will serve as a balanced and helpful guide through many of the current missiological issues. (For a more detailed study of this topic, however, one will have to go beyond this to something like the recently translated study by Johannes Verkuyl, *Contemporary Missiology*, translated by Dale Cooper, published by Eerdmans, 1978.) In our day of tremendous religious pluralism and interest, *The Open Secret* is a must for any pastor's library and would serve as a useful basis for an adult church school class concerned with modern Christian missions.

RODNEY L. PETERSEN

American Apocalypse: Yankee Protestants and the Civil War, 1860-1869, by James H. Moorhead. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1978. Pp. xiv + 278. \$17.50.

There was more at stake in the American Civil War than the maintenance of the political union. Lincoln described America as the world's "last best hope." It was the redeemer nation anointed by God to show the world that men could live together harmoniously in a republican society. That Lincoln, no churchgoer, interpreted American history in millennial terms suggests how much millenarianism pervaded the northern consciousness and defined the meaning of the American Civil War.

The war galvanized the northern Protestant establishment's commitment to the idea of America as a redeemer nation. For northern Protestants, who dominated the American "mind," the war was an apocalyptic struggle. The discipline of the war promised to cleanse the nation of its excessive materialism and divisive individualism. The war bred consensus on previously contested issues such as abolition, and it imparted to all social reform and political ideology a stronger evangelical tone. The expected victory of Christian armies, marching to the "glory of the coming of the Lord," promised to cast out the evil demons of slavery, states' rights, and self-

ishness. The discipline of the war would forge internal social cohesion and shared loyalty to northern Protestant values of sobriety, industry, probity, and benevolence. The war would prepare the nation for the millennium.

It did not work out that way. The corruption of the Gilded Age and the pusillanimous efforts to reconstruct the South disillusioned the "true believers." The South's tenacious resistance to northern Protestant values demonstrated that the war had not been the Armageddon of the republic. New problems of urbanization, industrialization, immigration, and scientific theories which challenged traditional Protestant beliefs all reemerged with greater force after the war to confound and undermine the millennial promise. Most important, the millennial expectations of northern Protestants left them unprepared to deal with the ambiguities and paradoxes of a modernizing America. They prayed for total victory and apprehended total defeat. There was no middle ground. As Moorhead concludes, they could only receive disappointment.

Moorhead has written a brilliant book. He synthesizes an enormous literature on America's sense of providential destiny and understands the ambivalence among Protestants about their God and country. He recognizes that the belief in America as the new Israel led to divergent reactions among Protestants when they addressed specific social problems. Some became radical reformers; others became conservatives willing to leave temporal affairs to God alone. The war did not resolve these differences so much as it disguised them. More important, Moorhead reveals the danger of an idealistic conception of American destiny. By presenting the Civil War, or indeed any war, as a decisive religious test, Protestants made armies and navies, government, the arbiters of God's people and institutions. They relinquished to secular authorities their claims to higher law and dissent. They also encouraged a bellicose nationalism in which any aggressive act could be justified as extending Christ's kingdom. Such rhetoric echoed during the Spanish-American War, World War I, and in more recent struggles. In that sense, Moorhead has written a book of warning as much as a first-rate study of the northern Protestant mind and millenarianism in mid-nineteenth-

century America. All of us will profit by reading and pondering this insightful book.

RANDALL M. MILLER

Saint Joseph's College
Philadelphia, Pa.

The Missionary Enterprise in China and America, ed. by John K. Fairbank. Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1974. Pp. 446. \$16.50.

This symposium is welcome in a time when the Peoples' Republic of China is seeking to relate to the outside world and when doors are being opened for a better understanding of recent developments in Chinese life and culture. It is also welcome because it seeks to examine the origin, development, effect and the success and/or failure of Protestant missions in China, to examine and evaluate the relation of missions and missionaries to Chinese culture, to Sino-American political relations, to Chinese nationalism, and to Chinese Communism. It also sheds light on the image of China which missions and missionaries portrayed to their American supporters. This book also recognizes a fact that has been ignored by historians, namely that historians have passed by the missionary as "the invisible man of American history." After all, for more than a century missionaries were the main contact points between the Chinese and the American peoples.

After an introductory chapter by Editor John K. Fairbank, on "the many faces of Protestant missions in China and the United States," twelve collaborators provide scholarly chapters on a variety of subjects. Their studies are divided into three parts: Protestant Missions in American Expansion; Christianity and the Transformation of China; Christian Mission Images and American Politics.

While Americans and Chinese were involved in each other's histories since 1784, people-to-people contact occurred during about one century, mostly under the unequal treaty system from the 1840s to the 1940s. The first Protestant missionaries were part of the Anglo-American community at Canton in 1830, but by the 1860s after wars with Britain and the treaties which opened up China's main treaty ports, pioneer missionaries began to enter the interior. By 1920,

some 5,000 missionaries were scattered across China, including wives who often served as teachers or nurses. Include the British and European missionaries, and there was an impressive establishment of churches, hospitals, schools, colleges, and other institutions in China. These were inherited by the Peoples' Republic of China in 1949. "By that time," says the editor, "it became evident that few Chinese were likely to become Christians and that the missionaries' long-continued effort, if measured in numbers of converts, had failed."

An investigation of this historical process and the present situation is the objective of this book. The relation of the Gospel to Chinese language and culture is discussed, as are many interesting aspects of the missionary enterprise in China: the theology of missions, the relation of missions to the military and political "opening up" of China, the attitude and stance of Protestant missions, missionaries and Chinese Christians towards the nationalistic and the Communistic revolutions.

It is interesting to note that the Chinese Communist revolution has stressed the spread of literacy to everyone, the publication of journals and pamphlets in the vernacular, the education and equality of women, the abolition of child-marriage, the importance of public duty over family and filial obedience, the increase of agricultural production, public health clinics, discussion groups, the acquisition of western knowledge and technology to improve life. The editor affirms that "Missionaries in the nineteenth century pioneered in all of these activities." Yet, Communists today resent any mention of this past record of the missionaries.

Indeed, missionaries especially in educational centers and colleges were "spiritual reformers" whose work involved them in every aspect of social reform; thereby they contributed to the revolutionary changes in China. And they also contributed to the American public response to them. Their impact upon American policy, however, is not too clear. There is little indication that the government in Washington listened to the missionaries in determining foreign policy towards China.

There is much in this volume concerning the relation of missions in China to American expansion and imperialism. It also raises the question as to whether one culture can pene-

trate another, and if one religious tradition is able to penetrate another. Indeed, penetration did take place but often not in the manner in which the missionaries intended.

As for imperialism Arthur Schlesinger writes that Christian missions were a "polluter," and perhaps, therefore, a more "insidious" kind of imperialism. Yet, he is inclined to be more charitable in his assessment of missionary imperialism, calling it a "cultural imperialism," especially in medical and educational missions. This somewhat "superior" method is expressed in the way Americans have been active in nation building in Japan, Korea, and to some extent in Vietnam.

The editor calls attention to the enormous opportunities that await scholars in pursuing further studies in this area. While the British have long been at work on their records dealing with their relations to China, "the exploratory surveys and case studies in this volume suggest the dimensions of the missionary contact and its repercussions, as yet largely unexplored, in China and America."

This volume is a mosaic or series of case studies on the missionary enterprise in China and America by competent and objective Sino-American scholars with two or three exceptions. Therefore, it lacks the warmth and the spirit that is usually associated with missionary histories written by participants in the enterprise. Yet, it is a pioneer study by historians who are beginning to take seriously the part of missions and missionaries in the relation of China to America. Further, it is a study that will be helpful in the relation not only of Protestant missions and missionaries to Chinese and other cultures today, but of Christian missions and missionaries to other religions and the cultures to which they are integrally related. And it certainly will be a critical guide to any proposals by Christians anywhere in their approach to the Peoples' Republic of China.

ELMER G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

Architect of Unity: A Biography of Samuel McCrea Cavert, by William J. Schmidt. Friendship Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 338. \$9.95 (paper), \$14.95 (cloth).

The author of this fascinating and comprehensive biography of Samuel McCrea

Cavert brings to his task a long study of and association with his subject. He had access to sources in the libraries of the National and World Councils of Churches, and in the private papers and letters of the Cavert family. Close associates of Cavert, among them Mrs. Cavert, Robert T. Handy, R. H. Edwin Espy, Roswell Barnes, have provided him with many personal details. Yet, the author admits, "He (Cavert) became, indeed, my chief mentor in things ecumenical."

As one who knew "Sam," worked with him, and who has been involved in the ecumenical movement, the reading of this book by the reviewer has been a refresher course recalling and illuminating many first-hand experiences of past years.

We have in this volume the lively story of a prominent leader of American and World Protestantism covering half a century. Always his life and activity are seen within the context of the history of American and European Protestantism, through two world wars, their ramifications, and their consequences. For about three decades Samuel McCrea Cavert was the executive of the Federal Council of Churches, then of its successor the National Council of Churches. During that time he was also actively engaged in the development of the ecumenical movement and the shaping of the World Council of Churches (he was largely instrumental in giving it that name). After serving the National Council of Churches, he was named Executive Secretary of the New York office of the World Council of Churches.

The McCreas and the Caverts of Charlton, New York, were rooted in Scotch-Irish Presbyterian piety and doctrine. Though modified into an "evangelical liberalism" through the years, this heritage was the cohesive center of Sam's entire lifetime. Graduated from Union College, *summa cum laude*, where he was president of the YMCA, he earned an M.A. in Philosophy from Columbia University, the B.D. from Union Seminary in New York, was ordained, assisted William Adams Brown at Union Seminary for a year, traveled on a Fellowship to India and the Far East, enrolled in the Graduate School at Harvard, enlisted as a Chaplain in the U.S. Army, started work on the War-Time Commission of the Churches and became Secretary of the Committee on the War and the Religious Outlook of the Federal Council of Churches. He married Ruth Miller in 1918 and suffered

her tragic death after the birth of their daughter, Mary. Then his conciliar work in the Federal, National, and World Councils of Churches began.

In 1920 he became the Associate Secretary of the Federal Council of Churches; in 1921 he became the General Secretary of the Federal Council. His marriage to Ruth Twila Lytton in 1927 was an interesting and fortunate episode in Sam's pilgrimage; it was blessed with great benefits to both parties over many years. From then onward Sam was busily engaged in travels, visits, consultations, and meetings before and after the War relating to the formation of the World Council of Churches, its first (Amsterdam), second (Evanston), third (New Delhi), and fourth (Uppsala) Assemblies. He attended the Third Session of Vatican Council II, and the Church and Society Conference in Geneva, 1966.

Schmidt illuminates many facets of Sam's life and work and relates them to personalities, events, and critical issues. Sam was early torn between the quiet academic life and the tensions and confidence of an executive career. Schmidt writes honestly about the painful but creative crises into which Sam was thrust: the bitter criticisms of the Federal Council, the charge of Communism against the Council, the Flynn controversy, and the "denominational barrage." Later, he was caught in the tensions between the European and American types of Christianity.

Through all his career, Sam consistently believed that Christianity offered (1) personal salvation, (2) social justice, and (3) Christian unity. Through his mediation he brought Dr. and Mrs. Martin Niemöller to the United States; through his persuasion Karl Barth wrote his provocative letter to the American Christians. He believed that isolated and independent divisions among Christians could be overcome through cooperation, consultation, and the cultivation of a spirit of unity. There were men more visible in their leadership during his lifetime, such as Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop Oxnham, and Fosdick, but Cavert by his quiet, winsome, reasonable approach, through addresses, articles and conferences played a more lasting and effective role in the conciliar movement. One can learn from him how a gentle, courteous, friendly man of integrity, wisdom, and character can live and work and achieve in the midst of exasperating pressures.

Not only is this volume an exciting biography of Cavert, "architect of unity," but it is a valuable account of the story of the ecumenical reality in this century and the persons, events, crises, and problems which it involved. That reality cries out today for leaders with similar insight, conviction, discernment, zeal, and temperament.

ELMER G. HORMIGHAUSEN

A Concise History of the Christian World Mission: A Panoramic View of Missions from Pentecost to the Present, by J. Herbert Kane. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1978. Pp. 210. \$4.95 (paper).

The author believes that all committed Christians should have a working knowledge of the Christian world mission. And because books on the subject are too long, too heavy, and too detailed for popular use, a shorter and more usable book should be written. The result is the present volume.

Kane's book is divided into two parts: Part I, Missions Through the Ages from Pentecost to William Carey; and Part II, Around the World. Part Two includes the expansion and development of Protestant missions in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, missions in the Muslim world, in Asia, Africa, Latin America, and in Europe, concluding with two chapters of missions in retrospect and prospect.

The book includes facts and figures on Christianity in various parts of the world, a list of significant dates in mission history and a comprehensive index. Dr. J. Herbert Kane has served as a missionary to China, has written extensively on missions, and now teaches World Mission and Evangelism at the Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

The story of missionary activity and expansion from 30 to 1850 A.D. is told in an interesting and succinct way. The author manages to include in this volume a mass of pertinent information, significant evaluations of missions, and critical problems which now confront missions. He supplies the reader with the difficulties and the problems of missions today in the Muslim world and in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Europe. He writes about the sturdy qualities of early missionaries and the excruciating problems

which they encountered. He faces up to the new problems of missions: retrenchment and the reduction of missionaries from 3,160 in 1971 to 3,045 in 1976; independent mission churches; nationalism; decreased seminary candidates; loss of motivation and funds; and Communism.

He finds encouragement in the new interest in missions, short term programs, world missionary radio, Bible correspondence courses, extension theological education, Bible translations, literature Evangelism. He also is encouraged by the following: Evangelism in Depth (EID) pioneered by Dr. R. Kenneth Strachan, the Faith Mission Movement, the Bible Institute Movement, Inter-Varsity Fellowship, the Navigators, Campus Crusade, the Charismatic movement. He also refers to the fact that today 3,500 non-Caucasian missionaries are serving in cross-cultural situations. And there are a number of thriving mission fellowships: The Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association of the United States of America; The Christian Missionary Alliance Fellowship of Asia founded in 1970; The Asian Missionary Association, 1965; The East-West Center for Missionary Research and Development, 1975, whose purpose is to train 10,000 Asian missionaries by the year 2000; The Chinese Congress on World Evangelization, 1976; The Evangelical Fellowship of India which sponsored the All-India Congress on Mission and Evangelization. Similar groups in West Africa and Latin America have organized for missionary effort in those sections of the world.

Many questions are raised by the author about the pros and cons of the Crusades; about the difficulties of missionary work among Muslims; about the impact of missionary work on China, India, Japan, et al; about what missionaries did that was right and wrong; about the causes for the amazing growth of Christianity in Africa; and about the prospect for missions today.

While he poses problems for missions today, he is encouraged by the spiritual renewal taking place in home churches, an increasing awareness of world problems, a renewed interest in evangelism, a concern for church growth, guided tours of the mission fields, the demand for missiology as a respectable discipline in theological education, the present interest in religion, the wide distribution of the Scriptures, the pres-

ent generation of student interest in missions, and world wide communication through radio and TV.

The author writes from a free Church tradition and does not attempt to deal in depth and extent with missions in the old line denominations. He does not attempt to enter into the theology of missionary motivation and objectives. He has written a very good book which will certainly help to give committed Christians a much-needed knowledge of the world mission of Christianity. He has succeeded in giving us a "concise" story of "the Christian world mission."

ELMER G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

Celebrating the Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth, by Richard J. Foster. New York: Harper & Row, San Francisco, CA, 1978. Pp. 179. \$7.95.

Dr. Foster has written a timely, useful, comprehensive, well-organized and scholarly book on spiritual disciplines. As D. Elton Trueblood writes in the Foreword, "There are many books concerned with the inner life, but there are not many that combine real originality with intellectual integrity." This combination is found in Foster's book.

But how can disciplines be celebrated? After all, disciplines are rules and it is difficult if not impossible to sing about regulations! Foster maintains that when disciplines are turned into law they lead to death. On the contrary, when disciplines are seen as ways that lead to life, they can be regarded as gifts of God. "The spiritual disciplines are doors to liberation."

Foster believes that "superficiality is the curse of our age. The doctrine of instant satisfaction is a primary spiritual problem. The desperate need today is not for a greater number of intelligent people, or gifted people, but for deep people."

He also believes that disciplines are not for spiritual giants which are beyond the reach of ordinary people. God intends the fullness of life for "people who have jobs, who care for children, who must wash dishes and mow lawns."

The contents of Foster's book are formulated around three disciplines: The Inward

Disciplines (meditation, prayer, fasting, study); The Outward Disciplines (simplicity, solitude, submission, service); The Corporate Disciplines (confession, worship, guidance, celebration).

The reader will soon sense that Foster not only uses Scripture in his discussion of disciplines, but the classics and a good measure of material from secular sources.

In his discussion of meditation, he quotes Merton, "True contemplation is not a psychological trick but a theological grace." And he discusses meditation in light of its widespread use in our time. While he grants that meditation does involve detachment, in the Christian sense it also involves attachment. He is aware of the threat of meditation because it calls us to enter into the living presence of God for ourselves. And most people have never been taught how to meditate. He writes of the different forms of meditation and presents some specific exercises for meaningful meditation. Meditation, says Foster, is closely associated with solitude (on which he writes a chapter). And it is not a single act, but it is a way of life.

Perhaps Foster's chapters on fasting, study, simplicity, and solitude will be appreciated most by Protestant readers. About fasting, John Wesley wrote that "some have exalted religious fasting beyond all Scripture and reason; and others have utterly disregarded it." Foster writes about fasting in the Bible, in the life and teachings of Jesus, in the spiritual history of Christianity. Fasting for him is not only the abstinence from food, but the ascetic practice of living simply. However, physical fasting can "bring breakthroughs in the spiritual realm, that could never be had in any other way. It is a means of God's grace and blessing that should not be neglected any longer."

It is encouraging to find a writer on spirituality emphasizing the discipline of ordered and hard study as a means of growth into the full stature of life in Christ. Often, theological and/or Biblical study are regarded as separate from the cultivation of the spirit.

In his Foreword, Trueblood singles out the chapter on "simplicity" as worthy of special mention; he likes Foster's idea that simplicity goes beyond the adoption of "plain garb." "Hang the fashions. Buy only what you need," writes Foster. Trueblood adds, "Here is a radical proposal which, if widely

adopted, would be immensely liberating to people who are the victims of the advertisers, particularly those on television. A genuine cultural revolution would ensure if considerable numbers were to obey the trenchant command, De-accumulate." Amen!

This book is a welcome guide to the disciplines which beckon us to "the Himalayas of the Spirit."

ELMER G. HOMRIGHAUSEN

Sacred Art in a Secular Century, by Horton & Hugh Davies. The Liturgical Press, Collegetown, Minn., 1978. Pp. 106. \$13.50.

Under joint authorship (father and son) this book fulfills in all respects the purpose for which it was intended and the need it was designed to meet. "This handsome volume," states the book jacket, "was written with the purpose of aiding us to visualize and appreciate paintings, etchings, and sculptures done in our century, works which have given a rebirth to religious symbolism in art. Brief, but comprehensive, the volume examines the impact of twenty-four artists, including Chagall, Rouault, Nolde, Epstein, Lipchitz, Rothko, Moore, Bacon, Dali, Kollwitz, Barlach, Spencer, Picasso, and Richier." The authors, Horton Davies, whose five-volume series on *Worship and Theology in England* (Princeton University Press) established his reputation internationally as a research historian and liturgical scholar, and his son, Hugh, director of the University Gallery, University of Massachusetts/Amherst, have produced a definitive piece of artistic work for which they were equipped aesthetically and academically in a superior way.

In an age when traditional symbols are falling into disuse and are being replaced by pale substitutes, the authors address themselves to two basic questions: (i) Is it possible to recover an appreciation of the power and meaning of traditional religious symbols? And (ii), can attempts be made to establish new patterns of religious symbols or new meanings for old symbols that will communicate immediately to moderns? (p. 3). There follow four discussions: an introductory survey of trends among symbolic interpretations and suggested accountings of them, the clusters of schools of artistic ex-

pression, and the perspectives which facilitate our understanding of their meaning; (1) Old Symbols Renewed and Revised; (2) Old Symbols Syncretized or Secularized; (3) New Symbols and Emphases; and (4) A New Religious Spirit and Its Signs. Through well annotated footnotes, a selected bibliography, and the assistance of an abundance of prints and illustrations, even the amateur student of art and symbolism can find his/her way appreciatively in these chapters.

This is a book to refer to again and again for information, but more than this, it indicates that an era of art and symbolism has come sufficiently of age and that the time is opportune for mature reflection upon it. The Davieses have not only initiated it, but have set a high standard for others to profit by and emulate.

DONALD MACLEOD

Unfinished Easter: Sermons on the Ministry, by David H. C. Read. Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 1978. Pp. 132. \$4.95.

Those of us who have learned to expect only the first-rate in the writings of David H. C. Read will not be disappointed in this latest collection of sermons from his pulpit and pen. Since 1956, Dr. Read has been senior minister at the Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City, having come to America from the position of chaplain to students at the University of Edinburgh. Through the National Radio Pulpit, his publications (thirteen books) and the weekly witness of his own pulpit, he is generally regarded today as one of the most respected voices in the ministry of the United Presbyterian Church, USA. One of his more obvious competencies is to be able to interest a sophisticated congregation and at the same time to be appreciated and understood by common people.

Here, in this slim volume, are eighteen short sermons from his National Radio Pulpit program. What makes them distinctive, apart from their religious and literary substance, is their focus upon the ministry—not professionally—and "what does the preacher really believe when not in the pulpit doing his job?" (Preface). Dr. Read poses questions and then answers them from the perspective of

his own life, beliefs, and experience. Some of these questions are: What Makes Me a Believer? I'm Praying for You—So What? Who Could Be Against Jesus? Do We Have to Be Zealous? These chapters read like devotions and are equally inspiring.

No one can decipher or explain another preacher's pulpit effectiveness; yet there are certain characteristics about Dr. Read's sermonic witness which provide at least a partial answer. Apart from his basic sense of the claim of the Gospel, he is positive about preaching. Can we imagine ever his "chucking" the pulpit for sitting cross-legged on a rug and listing the pluses and minuses of his personal counteractions to and from others? He has, moreover, a sober sensitivity to the problems Christianity poses and which quasi-Christianity discards as unreal or irrelevant. Again and again he takes certain concepts or terms and rescues them from minimal meanings and helps us to see them in their Christian connotation. Often through merely a simple aside and in contemporary terms he shows a fresh and perceptive grasp of the human problem. No one should model his or her preaching ministry after another or teach others to do so. Nevertheless preachers will read these chapters to their own personal edification and profit.

DONALD MACLEOD

Living in a New Age, by Laurence H. Stookey, C.S.S. Publishing Co., Lima, O., 1977. Pp. 110. \$3.25.

This is a series of nine sermons for Easter-tide, based upon the lessons for Year B in the United Methodist Alternate Lectionary. The author, Laurence Stookey, is associate professor of Preaching and Worship at Wesley Theological Seminary, Washington, D.C. The title is suggested by the general theme of Easter and the sermons are related to the idea of that new age which God through his redemptive work in Christ has achieved. The Introduction discusses the structure of the lectionary for this particular season and includes some background observations upon the pericopes and the biblical writer. The first sermon is an innovative and creative presentation intended for Easter Eve or a Vigil. The rest are based largely upon the First Epistle of John and are followed indi-

vidually at the end by a reflective commentary. Professor Stookey is generally a clear and plain writer, although the line of thought in some of these sermons could be more finely honed. Nevertheless, these chapters represent good background thinking and evidences of a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of preaching within a liturgical context.

DONALD MACLEOD

A Princeton Companion, by Alexander Leitch. Princeton University Press, Princeton, N.J., 1978. Pp. 559. \$15.00.

This book is "the work of many hands." From the perspectives of interesting substance, historical and biographical matters, and even technical craftsmanship, it is an example of editorial excellence. The editor and compiler, Alexander Leitch, served Princeton University in a series of responsible capacities: a member of the Class of 1924 he spent forty-two years in the employ of his *alma mater* under Presidents Hibben, Dodds, and Goheen. As an officer of the administration the sequence of his roles included thirty years as Secretary of the University. His grasp of campus affairs and his acquaintance with a host of world figures and significant campus personalities equipped him adequately to select the names and subjects for this encyclopedia of the varied items and annals of the history of one of the nation's great universities.

Anyone who has studied at Princeton or has had an acquaintance with the Princeton community will find this volume a real fascination to read and explore. Whether it be a biographical sketch of a "name" scholar or scientist, the development of an academic department, the story of a campus building or quadrangle, the fortunes of athletic teams or sports, the magnificent Gothic chapel, or the career of the eating clubs, here is interesting reading for everyone and a treasure of literary quality commensurate with the reputation of the school it celebrates.

DONALD MACLEOD

Church Music and the Christian Faith, by Erik Routley. Agape, Carol

Stream, Ill., 1978. Pp. 153. \$3.95 (paper).

Erik Routley, formerly a minister in Edinburgh, Scotland, and lecturer and Chaplain of Mansfield College, Oxford, and at present a member of the faculty of Westminster Choir College, is one of today's best-known figures in the field of church music. He is also a theologian, seeking to provide insights into the relationship between theology and church music. What he offers in this new book echoes theoretical and practical matters from his earlier *Church Music and Theology* (SCM Press, 1959)—updated, to be sure, but in essence the same arguments. It seems as if he hopes, by restating his case, someone will *finally* listen. I should hope the same. Erik Routley deserves to be listened to!

The problem to which Dr. Routley addresses himself is finding a theological basis for judging and using church music—an issue which must be dealt with apart from the “establishment” attitudes of patronizing indifference or repressive dogmatism. “What theology ought to be able to achieve,” writes Dr. Routley, “is not so much the establishing of laws [after the manner of the Old Testament] as the removing of taboos, embarrassments, and barriers to decent conversation. This is what the New Testament is about.” From a New Testament gospel of grace, he invokes a principle of restraint in church music. Beauty, he suggests, is a by-product of this, and is not to be sought after self-consciously (as in much music of the Romantic genre). Johann Sebastian Bach serves as Dr. Routley's model of self-restraint and self-renunciation.

The book is full of musical illustrations—enough so, that the reader will want to be near a piano to discover what's “good” and what's “bad” about the examples; in which instances “breaking” certain musical “laws” (e.g., no parallel fifths or octaves) can produce “ugly” music, and in which passages such deviations from these “laws” can be appropriate and “right.” The examples serve well to raise the reader's musical consciousness. And Dr. Routley's incisive, lively, and often witty and down-to-earth commentary further underscores his arguments: (“ . . . How often a reviewer finds himself hard put to devise a way of saying without offense, ‘This new anthem is blameless but screamingly dull.’”)

Dr. Routley attacks, with solid theological

and aesthetical ammunition, many practices of church musicians today. Take, for example, the “tendency to begin in one key and end in another, not infrequently in the key a tone higher.” (I once heard an organist play “Christ of the Upward Way,” raising each of the four verses by a half-step!) Dr. Routley's comment: “I have heard organists do this . . . , blissfully ignored that the source of their inspiration is cafeteria-Muzak.”

As an example of other customs “which have precious little authority or precedent and about which questions are never asked,” Dr. Routley discusses the singing of “Amen” at the end of all hymns. This was appropriate, he points out, to ancient Ambrosian hymns ending with a trinitarian doxology (the “Amen” signifying a “This we believe!” voiced by orthodox Christians). However:

Singing amen after post-Reformation hymns was unknown before about 1850. There is no older precedent for it, it was in any case an error, and those who initiated it have long repented of it. It is an excellent example of a custom which people still jealously guard in America, any criticism of which arouses great indignation, and any argument against which is disregarded.

Worshippers who are appalled by the noisy chatter which usually precedes the service will take delight in Dr. Routley's advice on that matter:

The horror of any kind of silence is a frequent symptom in Britain; in some American circles it is a disease in an advanced stage. Choirs and clergy chatter about everything under the sun until seconds before the service, and naturally congregations follow their example. It is considered unneighborly *not* to chatter. The truth that it is at some seasons unneighborly to chatter is always overlooked. In extreme cases there is only one remedy. This is to ask the organist to collaborate by keeping the instrument silent altogether before the introit or the first hymn; then to instruct the choir, after the vestry prayer, to remain totally silent until they open their mouths in song; then for the clergy to take on themselves a two-minute Trappist vow—and only when everybody has got used to silence (the removal of the organ music for a while is the best way of

shutting up the gossipers; they soon feel out of place) should the pre-service volunteers be restored.

Should hymns be sung in harmony or unison? What about processionalists? Alternatives to the pipe organ (piano, guitar, electronic organ ["... an instrument appropriate to the support of whatever hymns they sing in hell"])? These and many other practical and theoretical matters are faced head on by Dr. Routley—as they should be by all who are concerned with music in the church. *Church Music and the Christian Faith* is a remarkably fine book. It should be read by every pastor, choir director, organist, singer and non-singer. Everyone will not agree with all of Dr. Routley's points, but at least, perhaps, they will begin to do some long overdue *thinking* about theology and music.

G. R. JACKS

Our Own Hymnbook, by C. H. Spurgeon. Pilgrim Publications, Pasadena, Tex., 1975. Pp. 264. \$3.25 (paper).

This facsimile reprinting of the hymnal compiled in 1866 by Charles H. Spurgeon and used during his fruitful ministry at London's Metropolitan Tabernacle is to be noted by students of hymnology and the history of preaching and worship. A compendium of 1,060 hymns and metrical psalms, the collection draws upon four centuries of British and American hymnody and serves as a ready gauge of theological emphases in worship in the evangelical tradition of the nineteenth century. Although the majority of Spurgeon's selections are of eighteenth-century origin, there is a liberal sprinkling of "contemporary hymns" of the Victorian era, as well as a number of Spurgeon's own poems.

Spurgeon published works of earlier authors in relatively unaltered form, although occasionally he omitted one or more of their original stanzas. While most of these texts have passed out of common usage, this volume constitutes an accessible resource for those who wish to compare modern editions of many hymn texts with their original forms. Spurgeon's comprehensive index of first lines of *stanzas* commends this collection to preachers and others who find occasion to quote fragments of hymns. Useful as well

are Spurgeon's detailed topical index and doctrinally-arranged table of contents.

In a time of liturgical renewal and emphasis upon the heritage of Christian worship, readily affordable reprintings of significant historical material are to be welcomed. This little book should find a secure place in the library of anyone for whom the evolution of congregational praise holds professional or aesthetic interest.

R. DAVID HOFFELT

Henry Ward Beecher: Spokesman for a Middle-Class America, by Clifford E. Clark, Jr. University of Illinois Press, Urbana, Ill., 1978. Pp. 288. \$12.95.

In this thorough and balanced account, Clark presents a sensitive and engaging portrait of the popular preacher who embodied as much as anyone else the aspirations and ambivalences of an increasingly urban America in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. Clark relates the development of specific themes in Beecher's preaching and writing over the span of a half-century to his calculated response to such challenges as sectionalism and industrialization. In so doing, he traces Beecher's gradual shift from enterprising evangelicalism to a romantic Christianity of morality and responsible individualism in a pluralistic social context. Regarding Beecher's own story as an index of cultural values of the Victorian era, Clark attributes Beecher's popularity to his ability to arouse the sympathies and assuage the anxieties of his generation with a message of hope, self-improvement, and purposeful identity.

Emphasizing the unevenness and inconsistency of Beecher's theological views, Clark writes of the divergences and affinities of Beecher's thought with that of other prominent churchmen of his time, notably the work of Horace Bushnell. He makes highly satisfactory use of Beecher's correspondence with other members of his family and of the effects of Beecher's public career on his domestic life. Also significant is Clark's convincing investigation of the central, though often overlooked influence of personal friendship and animosity in Beecher's much-publicized trial for adultery.

Clark's sympathetic biography demonstrates

the close interaction of personal motivation with Beecher's public stance, although the reader frequently may wish for a more intimate treatment of Beecher's complex personality than is presented. Further, if one might take exception to the degree of Beecher's importance in social reform which Clark implies, it may be due to a lingering suspicion that Beecher's influence derived as much from the manner of his oratory as from the positions he espoused. A more systematic analysis of the operational effect of Beecher's

preaching and lecturing would enhance Clark's comprehensive summary of Beecher's thematic content and ideological tendencies.

Still, it is difficult to disagree with Clark's insights into Beecher's personality and assessment of his unparalleled success as a spokesman for the spirit of an age more perplexed than it liked to admit. The study rests on solid scholarship and commends itself as interpretive biography which is no less enjoyable than it is enlightening.

R. DAVID HOFFELT

BOOK NOTES

by DONALD MACLEOD

ALLPORT, Gordon W., *Waiting for the Lord* (33 Meditations on God and Man). Macmillan Pub. Co., Inc., New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 123. \$5.95.

With an Introduction by Peter A. Bertocci, this volume provides us with thirty-three concise and thoughtful meditations by Gordon W. Allport of Harvard whom Richard I. Evans describes as a writer in the areas of psychology of personality and social psychology whose works practicing clinical psychologists found "second only to Freud's in day-to-day usefulness."

Any morning, prior to the nine o'clock bell, a small group of young people, faculty members, and community folk may be seen entering Appleton Chapel by Harvard Yard for a fifteen minute period of worship and reflection. Twice a year for twenty-eight years Gordon Allport was responsible for leadership of the service. In his introductory remarks, Peter Bertocci (Browne Professor of Philosophy at Boston University) writes: "Quiet, unobtrusive, with a goading sense of responsibility for his own privileges and for the underprivileged, Allport found deep satisfaction in the life of the worshipping community" (p. xvii).

Biblically based and person centered, these talks make worthwhile reading. Many sentences are as perceptive as they are quotable: "A sensitive intelligence is satisfied only if it can operate in some bigger frame of reference than that which it provides for itself" (p. 5); "Hope can be transvalued into a Christian virtue, provided it loses its self-centered reference" (p. 20); "How, in a university, does one obey the First Commandment? Figuratively as well as literally start the day at 8:45 with the Whole and not merely at 9 o'clock with the part" (p. 87); "In our modern educational setting we spend most of our time with the characteristic *what* questions, not with the ultimate *what for* questions" (p. 106). Always a student of the Bible, he read it, as he said, for insights not only into the *what* of human behavior but

into the *why* of God's purpose for humanity. Western culture, he felt, persists in separating these two questions that belong "naturally together."

Most preachers will find congenial thought sequences in these pages and not a few ideas by which to stretch their minds.

BURKE, John, *Gospel Power*. Alba House, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 117. \$4.95.

This book adds another title to a growing list of books on preaching by leading thinkers in the Roman Catholic Church. Fr. Burke, who serves as Executive Director of the Word of God Institute in Washington, D.C., comes to us with credentials above average in quality and quantity. With a background of study and practice in communications (as an associate director with NBC), in drama (he has a Master's degree in the field), and in theology (a doctorate in Sacred Theology), he is well fitted to apply various critical criteria to contemporary preaching. This he does competently in the opening pages of his discussion of "Gospel Power" and our vocation as preachers (pp. ix-xiv). The body of the book is taken up with three kinds of preaching (evangelization, catechesis, and didascalia) and concludes with a short treatment of the liturgical homily. Throughout these chapters Fr. Burke's writing is sustained by a good preliminary definition of preaching and a high estimate of its nature and objective. His method is marked by an effort to teach homiletical theory descriptively rather than didactically. His thinking is both biblically and theologically oriented and, although many truths and concepts he urges have been common to Protestant preaching for centuries, yet all of us appreciate his reiterating them so definitively. His perspective on the prerogatives of witness and proclamation, however, could benefit from some straightening: it is because there was originally a Gospel that we have the Church and

to that Gospel the Church must ever be in submission and under its judgment and direction.

COLQUHOUN, Frank, *Christ's Ambassadors*. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1979. Pp. 93. \$2.50.

This small volume is a reprint of an earlier edition (1965) in the Canterbury Books series by the former editor of "The Churchman" (British). Colquhoun, whose earlier books include the very useful *Parish Prayers* and *Contemporary Parish Prayers* (Hodder & Stoughton), is presently Canon Residentiary and Vice-Dean of Norwich Cathedral, England. In the course of five chapters he makes a strong case for the preacher's vocation and his responsibility in the pulpit for competent biblical exposition. Although some may question what seems to be an undue traditionalism in his position, yet any of us cannot help sensing his understanding of the deeply personal character of preaching, its inseparability from God's act of grace in history, and its sacramental role in the Church.

CRUM, Milton, Jr., *Manual on Preaching*. Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pa., 1977. Pp. 189. \$8.95.

This is not just another book about preaching. It is one of the more scholarly and academically respectable monographs on preaching to appear in several decades. Professor Crum, who for the past dozen years has taught homiletics at the Protestant Episcopal Seminary in Virginia, has given us a manual on the discipline of sermon development which deserves careful exploration. His aim is "to assist preachers in actually doing preaching" (p. 10) and this he acknowledges cannot be done without bringing together the HOW and the WHY of preaching the Good News.

The book is built around his own method and he testifies that "this method works." He spells out (p. 16) the character of his method under three foci: the Bible, human life (your own and the congregation's at the deeper level of behavior), and the sermon as story.

There follow seven cogent chapters which embrace the process of sermon creation, the hermeneutical task, the story product, etc. Among these, several discussions are original and fresh: the dynamics of the sermon and the liturgical context of preaching. This book is the product of wide and varied reading in a number of allied fields, including history, theology, and human behaviorism, with up to date references to a host of contemporary thinkers and scholars, such as Funk, Ramm, McLuhan, Wink, and many others. All teachers of preaching will discover in Crum's chapters a refresher course in the fine art of preaching.

GLASSE, James D., *The Art of Spiritual Snakehandling and Other Sermons*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1979. Pp. 112. \$3.95.

Your reviewer came to this book with more than usual interest because wherever and whenever he preached in any pulpit the Sunday after Dr. Glasse was the guest, the people were high in their praises of "the man from Lancaster." Although we have never met, yet the name of the President of Lancaster Theological Seminary is securely in the column of effective preachers.

This slim paperback contains sermons given at the preaching services at the Chautauqua Institution in the summer of 1976. Along with the eight sermons, the author has included an interesting introduction and an epilogue consisting of personal observations on preaching and the preacher. Dr. Glasse is a topical preacher with a definite biblical orientation and an obviously deep understanding of the human problem. The whole world of church administration, parish concerns, student queries, and contemporary domestic give-and-take are his province. Yet, as he unravels an issue, it is from the perspective of the gospel of the New Testament that he begins his solution. This is a good book for a preacher to read on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

GWYNNE, Walker, *The Christian Year*. Longmans, Green, & Co., New York, N.Y., 1917. (Reprinted by Grand

River Books, Detroit, Mich., 1971). Pp. 143. \$11.00.

This is an old book, yet its quality merited a reprint for contemporary accessibility. The scarcity of monographs on the Christian Year prompted the author at that time to devour Hooker, Dowden, Staley, Duchesne, and Seabury and to produce a compact, factually dependable, and historically and biblically oriented accounting of the origins, significance, and values of the church calendar. In the course of twenty-three brief chapters, Dr. Gwynne encapsulates cogently the facts, moods, and liturgical thrust of each festival and provides some clear guidelines which can serve to regularize many matters now victimized by confusion.

HARRIS, Irving, *The Breeze of the Spirit*. The Seabury Press, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 190. \$8.95.

The influence of the personal ministry of Samuel M. Shoemaker and the emergence of the Faith-at-Work movement are the concomitant themes of this book. Few persons possessed the qualifications to write this story as had Irving Harris whose identification with Shoemaker's varied ministries lent a first-time-ness to this book which otherwise would not have been possible. In the course of nineteen chapters, Harris sketches the depth and breadth of Shoemaker's great humanity, his love of people, the vast network of his personal connections (all of which were extensions of his ministry), and the liveliness of the Gospel which nourished him and through him nourished others. Anyone who is eager to see the Christian faith as a moving and redeeming drama in the world of common men and women will read this book with much satisfaction.

HORNE, Chevis F., *Being Christian in Our Town*. Broadman Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1978. Pp. 138. \$3.50.

Chevis Horne is beginning his thirty-first year as minister at the First Baptist Church, Martinsville, Va. In an age when so many pastors flit from bloom to bloom or, as a

former dean at Princeton once said, "hurry to exchange one set of headaches for another," it is salutary to find a member of the clergy spending a lifetime in the same parish. In his dedication of this new book of sermons, Dr. Horne refers to his own congregation as "exceptionally mature, loving, accepting, and supportive people." In being so, these people at the same time have called forth from their minister a strong pulpit witness of which these sermons are ample proof.

Here are fifteen sermons in which Dr. Horne shows himself as a good writer whose style is crisp and clean and frequently punctuated with sentences that are quotable. He is a teacher in the pulpit. His illustrations are drawn from the Bible, literature, and everyday events, but are never hackneyed or overdrawn. In the Foreword, David H. C. Read writes: "It is refreshing to have these sermons issued for what they are without apology—the weekly exposition of the word by a devoted and competent workman."

KENIN, Richard & WINTLE, Justin, *The Dictionary of Biographical Quotation*. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, N.Y., 1978. Pp. 860. \$25.00.

Two sentences describe this unique encyclopedia: "The most complete dictionary we are ever likely to have of WHO SAID WHAT ABOUT WHOM." "A book to explore, to quote aloud from, to consult (and to browse through) in search of the human essence of virtually every man and woman who has left a name, for good or ill, in the annals of Britain and America." This massive collection (over 1,000 names) of remarks made by and about distinguished persons represents the fruits of a research team which made their final selections from a mountain of biographical quotations. People from all walks of life are included, preponderantly British because she is older but from the twentieth century there are more Americans. The choices of comments are well balanced so that a fair number of one's admirers appear side by side with one's detractors. All of us are aware, of course, that in any estimate of another, the writer reveals something of himself or herself. It is fascinating simply to select persons of a well

known literary, political, or scientific reputation and note how the editors "sought the magic that comes when insight and expression are married into a new amalgam of content and form" (p. xvii). This book is a presentation volume of unique character and lasting interest.

KNUDSEN, Raymond B., *Developing Dynamic Stewardship*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1978. Pp. 127. \$3.95.

With the current rash of books on evangelism, some people may lose sight of the fact that stewardship is the ethical extension of the commitment the former involves and demands. The author of this collection of fifteen sermons is fully aware of this possibility and hence he claims that "total commitment of one's self completely to Christ—spiritually, financially, and socially—is essential for a strong, enduring personal faith as well as for a giving church today." Dr. Knudsen, who is president of the Counselor Association and writer of the widely syndicated column, "The Counselor," writes with zeal and an up-to-date-ness that is refreshing. Accompanied by a store of everyday references and allusions his method is to talk to us while he explores our religious diseases and indicates routes towards cures. Budget Sundays can be a nightmare (especially after 5-10 years in the same pulpit). Author Knudsen shows us how exciting our appeal can be when the New Testament concept of stewardship is related to the whole of life.

RAINES, Robert A., *Going Home*. Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 1979. Pp. 145. \$6.95.

From the point of view of literary style, classical allusions, and precise composition the author of this book deserves very high marks. The sub-title elaborates upon the main title: *Going Home* comprises "a personal story of self-discovery, a journey from despair to hope." The saga unfolds in five chapters: Apprehended; Leaving Home; Living in Tents; Being Reborn; and Going Home. As a story it is very readable and as

drama it spells out more fully than the average newspaper does the parallel plots of life in the every day.

There are many things about this book that are puzzling and none of them is more enigmatic than the nagging question: why was it written? If it were intended for parish ministers, we are sure none would find in such a pitiable and pitiful tale any urging to "go and do likewise" or to tell others to do so. Maybe it was intended as an elegant rationalization of a post-parish, post-pulpit, post-domestic, post-everything situation. But neither is this useful to us because we are not shown how a selfish self was re-born into a suffering servant; rather we are told how to exchange one set of circumstances for another and call it fulfillment. The basic issue here is very, very old. Paul analyzed it in his *Letter to the Romans* (ca. A.D. 57) and John Bunyan dramatized it in *Pilgrim's Progress* (A.D. 1678). "Despair" and "hope" are not pieces in a game in which "fulfillment" means getting what you want regardless of who may be hurt. The soap opera mentality may luxuriate on a straw mat, but it says No to self only when it faces up to a Calvary. Maybe this book unthinkingly underscores this fact.

RAWLINS, C. L., *Index Volume: The Daily Study Bible*, by William Barclay. Westminster Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 1978. Pp. 213. \$3.75.

Sooner or later someone would put us in his or her debt by compiling a subject-index for Dr. Barclay's seventeen-volume Daily Study Bible. The publishing manager of the St. Andrew Press, Edinburgh, Mr. C. L. Rawlins, has fulfilled our common need and in honor of the author (Dr. Barclay died before the Index was published or a promised Foreword written) has presented the Index as a memorial to "this great man, undoubtedly one of the foremost communicators of the Christian faith of the century" (p. ix). There are six indexes here: Old Testament, New Testament, Subjects and Places, Personal Names, Foreign Words and Phrases, and Ancient Writings.

Rawlins, in his Introduction, describes the enormous output of the late Glasgow professor (more than sixty books in his life-

time), singling out particularly *The Daily Study Bible* which he prefers to describe as "a daily study of the Bible." This seventeen-volume series is characterized as "informative, devotional, and relevant" (p. vi). The method is not that of the technical commentator, although behind it lies "a masterful comprehension of biblical learning." It is the work of one in whose hands "the world of the New Testament comes vibrantly alive" and through whose explorations "the real meaning and present-day reality of every passage" are made clear. Barclay's aim is not "clinical precision," but through his writings he seeks to work "a powerful encounter" between humanity and "an infectious love for Christ." His comprehensive grasp of scripture and his ability to illustrate its message through classical and homely anecdotes and historical incidents are now made more fully available by this handy index.

TYLER, Edward, *Prayers in Celebration of the Turning Year*. Abingdon Press, Nashville, Tenn., 1978. Pp. 96. \$5.95.

Edward Tyler lives in Vermont in an old house where he and his artist wife collaborate in writing, designing, and printing their own books. A graduate of Bates College and Yale Divinity School, Tyler has served as chaplain at the University of Vermont and as minister of local churches. Here, in this slim volume, he gives us a collection of prayers for both the natural and festival seasons of the year. Written in exciting imagery and with a deep sense of human care, these prayers are gems of devotion and will be used widely by leaders of worship for group meetings within and beyond formal church exercises.

WALLIS, Charles L. (ed.), *The Ministers Manual*. (1979 Edition). Harper & Row, Publishers, San Francisco, CA, 1979. Pp. 280. \$7.95.

Continuing Doran's tradition of fifty-four years, Charles L. Wallis gives us his tenth edition of what is recognized as one of the most healthy examples of pulpit and worship aids published in America. This volume, comprising a wide variety of sources, represents the best thoughts of many religious leaders and preachers of the contemporary scene. The editor, who is also editor of *Pulpit Digest*, combines an unusual competence in seeking out materials of real substance with an apparatus of indexes which makes for ready reference. This is not a book for those who want others to do their thinking for them; it is an auxiliary repository out of which items may be drawn to make one's original ideas more palatable and interesting.

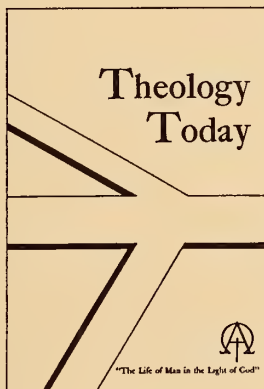
WATERS, Moir A.J., *Wings of Song*. 1978. Pp. 60. (Printed privately. Inquire to Rev. M.A.J. Waters, 383 Wharnccliffe Road, London, Ont., Canada N6G 1E4).

Among Canadian hymn writers, the Rev. Moir A.J. Waters has established his reputation in two collections, *Make a Joyful Noise!* and the more recent, *Wings of Song*. In the latter we have thirty new hymns, each of which is prefaced by a unique introductory page indicating the genesis of the poem and the significance of its message. These hymns were inspired by various devotional and scriptural experiences and more than one was written to be used on a particular occasion or to mark a congregational anniversary or event. All of us expect Dr. Waters to continue his productivity. One would wish, however, for him to fill out the great lack in our Protestant hymnody of meaningful hymns in the category of Holy Spirit, Sacraments (Baptism and Lord's Supper), Adoration, Stewardship, and national holidays. We have re-established many of our Christian festivals and emphases, but we feel impoverished when we attempt to express them in song.

ADDRESSES OF PUBLISHERS

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